ON

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

EMMANUEL BURDEN
A CHANGE IN THE CABINET
PARIS
THE PYRENEES
MARIE ANTOINETTE
HILLS AND THE SEA
ON NOTHING
ON EVERYTHING
ON SOMETHING
FIRST AND LAST
THIS AND THAT AND THE OTHER
A PICKED COMPANY

ON

BY

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ON

On Achmet Boulee Bey

THERE is a book, I have a book, printed in 1806. It was compiled (rather than written) by a country clergyman, who had before him (so he tells me on the title page) these objects :— "To increase *knowledge*, to promote *virtue*, to discourage *vice*, and to furnish Topics for Innocent and Ingenious *Conversation*."

On the 208th page I find this passage :

The Pacha Achmet Boulee Bey, Governor of Egypt, was remarkable for a great sensibility of heart. The pleasures permitted to him by law were far from satisfying him. He wanted to meet with a return of love, and had assembled, at a very considerable expense, a numerous seraglio, in hopes of meeting a beauty not only capable of inspiring love but of feeling all its force and impulse. Not one of this disposition did he find among twelve hundred Circassian, Georgian and Greek ladies whom he had purchased at different times.

Oh, admirable excerpt ! Oh, Divine anecdote ! Oh, perfect theme !

What ! You also, Achmet ? You also, Boulee ? *You* set out upon that quest, there, among the

Levantines so many years ago—and with what advantages! . . . *You* also failed? . . . My soul is fired to exalt the high complaint of man. But stay. First let me savour, point by point, that complete, that inimitable, text.

This Governor of Egypt "was remarkable for a great sensibility of heart." More sensible than the mass of us, was he? Greater in him than in you and me, my brothers, the hunger for the answering tone, for the echo to the soul? Yes, it would seem so. A more active hunger, at least; for it produced action, as we see farther on: he did not dream, he did. He did not ache forlorn, he sought: he hunted. Hence was he "remarkable." All men have wasted for the home of the spirit, for the completion of their being. All, all have waited in vain for the woman that should call them by their name. But in varying degrees. *He* was at the head of the chase. For *him* it was a rage, a fury, a crusade. He did not wait, he plunged, he charged. He would discover. He put it to trial and reached the limit of effort. He is our master and our exemplar. My homage is to Achmet Boulee Bey.

"The pleasures permitted him by law were far from satisfying him." There comes in the minor note. After that grand opening, after that crash upon the organ, "remarkable"—even among lovers, still questing lovers—the tone softens to our common dream. It is the weeping of Achilles, it is the sleep of Charlemagne, it is the dog of Ulysses—it is that domestic lesser something in the hero which is common to us all. There are laws: especially laws divine. They permit us this and that—the more gratitude to them. But, oh!

my friends, the things they fend away! "Visitors are requested not to touch," says the ordinance in the bazaar; though it also has a sign above it, "Entry free," and the same is true of this world. You may desire—desire is put quite lavishly at your disposition. But when it comes to enjoyment, there are restrictions, little friend.

Achmet was, I take it, from his name, employment and longitude (and latitude) (30° 2″ N., 31° 16″ E.— or thereabouts—I date from Greenwich, not from Paris or the Azores) a servant of Mahound and his law, the Mahoundish law. He might drink no wine—except champagne, if you call that a wine. No liqueur except *crème de Menthe.* No beer of the Franks. He might not (I understand—but this may be mere legend) exceed four wives. The pastime of divorce was open to him only under certain limitations: for instance, he had to return the dowers. He was under the law. And though this same law gave him much to delight his soul, gardens and good food, adventure, praise and a sort of monotonous music sung through the nose, horseback riding and camel-back riding, the dawn, the sea, the moon, and day and night, and the iron titles of the night—yet was he not satisfied. Nay, these things were *far* from satisfying him, says the text. For he desired what the law does not forbid, indeed, but also cannot give. He sought the great human converse, the plenitude, the deep embrace. Therefore did his great soul starve and weaken, and attempt recovery again if only to pursue what never yet was attained: the quarry that fails the hunter, the pearl that slips back into the sea. The law did its best. It said: "I am for your good. I desire your happiness. Come, you may play

with dolls and go a walk after lessons," but he turned away and sickened. "He was far from satisfied." He had heard the fairy horn. He had caught the savour of what content might be: a hint, a summons; and "he was far from satisfied."

"He wanted to meet with a return of love." Only that? My word, Achmet, you were easily pleased! You desired the wealth that is beyond the world: not only did you desire it, you claimed it as a matter of course. You wondered why you had it not, you thought it your due: your rightful food—this thing unknown to all the exiled sons of Pithecanthropus, this lost serene of Eden! The simple words give it in its high simplicity. "He wanted." Well! We also want, and we may go on wanting.

But you did not stand halted in mere wanting, strong soldier of the Nile. You struck spurs and rode. You are a model for us here. *You* set out to conquer and to hold. Life passes while *we* seek here and there forlornly; and how many little experiments must be tried, each separate, each ending in despair, before the first hint of achievement comes to *us*. We, the lesser ones, have ourselves to thank for such poor spoil, after such single-handed hunting! Not so you! You swept widely and at once—ranging a vast field, marching on a broad front, taking large sample of the world. Hence those masterly words, that you "had assembled at a very considerable expense a numerous seraglio." What manhood and what courtesy combined; what generosity and largesse, what proper care as well! You did not drive or coerce—for not thus is the unseizable attained. You did not order, no, nor wheedle; and you

did not command, though you sat on the throne of a king. You did not coax or threaten, or play a pretended indifference, or protest a passionate worship. You "assembled" them.

And they were ladies. Right, and right, and right again, Achmet! More than right! Twenty thousand times right! If the Thing can be found at all, there must be something of leisure perhaps and certainly of equality. Ladies for love, not women: oh! yes! No doubt at all! And so for you, my Lord, they had to be "Ladies." And you "purchased them." Right again! You went about it in the honourable way, with no misunderstanding, no room for false issues on either side: an honourable price was honourably paid. That, if anything, should open the door of the treasure house. You paid high, you paid well. You were at a charge. You made yourself the poorer to make yourself the richer. You proved to them as to the whole world that you held them dearly indeed—"at a considerable expense."

You acted with discretion and with a fine distinction. You purchased not in bulk or by contract, but neatly, carefully, "at different times." You weighed each opportunity, you gauged each transaction.

Achmet, your perseverance alone should have made you the one, the satisfied of lovers. Into how many eyes you looked! How many whispering voices you gauged! The sincerity of how many protestations did you not search with the white-hot flame of your own profound and tortured spirit! Is it she, or she? Is she here at last . . .? Twelve hundred of them—the splendid tale, the roya regiment of many and many, and more still, the

dwindling perspective of research. "Who knows?" you said. "At last, as the feet stumble in the final excess of weariness, the fountain may be heard . . . at last." You deserved it beyond all men, Boulee, and as we read we expect, breathless, the climax of your surpassing endeavour, we expect to hear at the very end the low tones of the beloved voice that answers, "Que tu perdes ou que tu gagnes, tu les aura toujours." Your reward is upon you. You shall be greeted with the divine reply, "Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens."

Achmet, take your ease. To one man Paradise shall be restored, and one man shall be, once in the story of the race, secure. One man shall make harbour. One man shall rest in his home.

. . . . . .

But what is this comes at the close of all? Wind of death! I know that chill—and Achmet knew it, too. Alas! Boulee! "Not one of this disposition did he find."

They were twelve hundred, come from the tenderest and the best; chosen out of all the Orient; patiently comprehended one by one; approached, protected, adored each in holy turn, "in hopes of meeting *one* not only capable of inspiring love but of feeling all its force and impulse" in her own breast. . . . Mortality returns: "Not one of this disposition did he find."

On an Educational Reform

SINCE we are determined (as I am not, but as all my colleagues seem to be) that a new world has arisen ; since, therefore, all institutions may be remodelled at will, I trust there will appear in the education of wealthy children a reform overdue these many years.

This reform is an addition, of a certain subject, to the curriculum of schools. We have all at one time or another deplored its absence : we all, in one crisis or another of our lives, recognize its necessity. If it be true that we have to-day an opportunity for new things, do let us inaugurate this novelty at least, which would be of such vast advantage to the generation now sprouting. And the new subject is **Fraud.**

Fraud is the sole basis of the only form of success recognized among us. By Fraud alone are those vast fortunes suddenly acquired which—and which only—are the condition of greatness in a modern man.

Fraud is the master subject, ignorance or inability in which dooms a man to toil and obscurity. Yet Fraud is never taught at school. Men who had the parts for a most brilliant career fail on leaving the Academies because they are outwitted by Guttersnipes who have no letters but *can* cheat.

On an Educational Reform

There used to be taught in schools Latin and Greek after a grammatical fashion, which made the better pupils true masters of the inwards of these languages. When they were so formed they were called "scholars." To this expertise was added some knowledge of a foreign language (usually French or German, but only a smattering thereof), and latterly also the elements of physical science and of mathematics, until these last branches took up so much time that often a choice was made between them and the older humanities.

So far, so good. Indirectly the young people were taught also the manner of their society, and this especially through the modern discipline of games. But there is not one of them (and I speak with feeling on the matter, for I have experience myself) who upon leaving school or the University has not suddenly found himself in a world where a ready practice in cheating proved the only thing of serious importance and yet was to him quite unfamiliar. He found himself, usually without resources, cast upon a world, wherein survival (or even decent honour and spiritual security) depended upon the exercise of certain arts of deceit to which he had never been trained, and which he must acquire at his peril. In proportion as he failed to acquire these arts he failed altogether and was cast away.

Everyone will admit that the swindling of one's fellow-beings is a necessary practice. Upon it is based all really sound commercial success, and through it men arrive at those solid positions which command the honour and respect of our contemporaries. Thus, the chief way of making money is by buying cheap and selling dear, or, rather, by buying cheap and selling dear quickly; but when

you buy cheap you only do so by taking in the vendor, and, when you sell dear, the purchaser. Your action may be remote and indirect, as when you gamble upon the Stock Exchange. It is commonly direct and personal as when you acquire under contract the services of another man. But it is essentially an exercise in overreaching. It is of its very nature getting some other human being into a state of mind in which he underestimates what you desire to get out of him or overestimates what you desire to unload upon him. Thus, in my own poor trade, I am a good business man if I can persuade some unhappy publisher or newspaper owner that the public is athirst for my words. Conversely, my honourable employers and masters will be good business men if they persuade me that no one is so base as to want to hear me at all, and that I am only employed as a sort of charity. And so it is with the selling of a boat or a house, or with the buying of land.

Another master-gate to fortune is abuse of confidence: you persuade men to entrust you with money for one purpose and then use it secretly for a very different end. If you bring off the deal it is your gain. If you drop the money the loss is theirs.

Another royal road is "merger"; another false description; another plain straightforward theft.

All these repose on a sound talent in Fraud, and, in general, so it is in all forms of fortune-getting, save in the highly specialised craft or mystery of blackmail. Upon cheating all honour, and therefore all happiness, depends. It is wealth so made which (save for those who inherit wealth and who are securely tied up as well) determines the position of a man to-day among his fellows.

Well, what trace is there of this great truth in the curriculum of our schools? It is entirely neglected! I admit that pomposity, which is a necessary element in all success, is indirectly taught. I admit still more freely and fully that the spirit of falsehood is taught as a sort of general subject, but I maintain that swindling as a particular subject is not taught at all, and even the most elementary forms of it, with which every boy ought to be acquainted in his early 'teens, come upon him with a shock when he is already a young married man launched in life and, as the phrase goes, battling with the world.

This, I say, is a shameful neglect. Here is an instance: the most elementary form of swindling, that which is, as it were, the gambit of every operation, and that which is the sum total of all the simpler operations of commerce, consists in giving a verbal assurance which it is intended to repudiate later by document or action. You promise a man something which you do not intend to perform, or you give a false description which reality will later expose, or in some other way you use the psychology of affirmation to your advantage.

Well, what could be simpler than to have a class (even if it were but half an hour a week) where all boys over a certain age could be trained by example both to be upon their guard against the false affirmation of others and (what is more important) to make false but plausible affirmations themselves with all the boldness which breeds success —to make affirmations particular, affirmations emphatic, affirmations probable, affirmations flattering.

Even the negative side of this very necessary piece of training is omitted, and boys are not taught

(at least in any school with which I have acquaintance) the importance of *economy* in falsehood.

The immature mind will, of course, tend to falsehood as a natural human instinct, but the force of kindly nature is here wasted because it lacks direction. Young men go out into the world lying freely about the grandeur of their acquaintance, their personal prowess, and the rest, all matters conducing in no way to the accumulation of wealth—which is the end of man. Now, what could be simpler than, in such a class as I suggest (I admit that half an hour a week is rather short commons, but everything must have a beginning)—what could be simpler than to give some direction at least to this pseudological factor in the mind and train it to the right end?

Examples should be set before youth. Let the master recite some braggart story of strength or skill such as is common among the young of the rich. Then let him show what a waste of energy it is, and how an equal amount of pseudological force expended in a useful channel, a false description or a flattery, might have earned £100. "It is just as easy," the good preceptor would tell his young charges, "to brag about a horse that you want to sell as about, say, your horsemanship, for which there is no market. It is just as easy to lie about the value of something you have for sale as it is to lie about your lineage. But in the first case you trouser the dibs, while in the second there is no stuff—it is wasted effort. Remember, therefore, my dear boys, to check yourselves when you are about to tell an uneconomical falsehood. Count ten before you speak and consider whether there be not ready to your hand some subject in

which you can fully satisfy this natural instinct of lying and at the same time prepare some advantage for your pocket."

It may be objected to me that if this very necessary reform were introduced and the elements of modern commerce were taught in all our schools, the results would cancel out; for since all our youth would be forearmed, there would still be waged in the great world outside the conflict of the better sharper against the worse, with victory as now to the master-thief. But such an objection applies to all forms of learning. My desire is to raise the general level of our gentry in this department, and especially not to leave men in middle age with the bitter memory of lost opportunities: opportunities lost through no personal fault, but through the neglect of those who had a sacred trust and who did not fulfil it. At least let the man of fifty be able to say to himself: "I had every advantage. My masters at school (and no one more than my dear old headmaster, Dr. Buggins) repeatedly warned me against the peril of honesty and were at pains to teach me how to overreach the innocent; if I have proved clumsy and am now living as a publisher's hack, the fault is all with me." As things now are, many a man who has sunk to be a proof-reader, or even an author, is, in his heart, bitterly reproaching those who launched him upon the world quite ignorant of affairs.

I conceive that the educationist who is ever eager to improve his changing science will here suggest particular subjects in this new department. He will see an expanding horizon of opportunity. My words have roused enthusiasm in him. He will ask me, for instance, why I have not included

special classes in blackmail, monopoly, bullying, bribery, perjury, and so forth.

Yes, certainly; all these should have their place, especially for older boys. But they may well be considered later. Perhaps such subjects would best be left to special institutions, such as those which were so successful in the last generation under the name of "crammers." Blackmail in particular, very like the art of outflanking in military science, requires a judgment of the world to which the mind can hardly attain till it is mature. Napoleon said: "Beware when you attempt to outflank that you be not outflanked yourself"; a sound saying, for anyone in process of edging round his opponent extends his own communications and leaves an opportunity for that opponent to edge round him. And so it is with blackmail; too often the blackmailer just in the act of seizing his prize (a post in the Ministry or what not) feels a sharp bite and discovers to his horror that the tables are turned.

In a word, the teaching of this art of blackmail is the teaching of a very difficult and skilful complex action which must not be attempted rashly, and that is why I have some hesitation in recommending it for the ordinary curriculum of schools. Nevertheless, the very rudiments of it, or, at any rate, some idea of what it is, might profitably be given even to the younger boys, and for this purpose I would suggest a visit to some neighbouring aquarium, where the slow antics of the crab in his tank so graphically mimic our public life. The attention of the lads could be directed by their master to the alternate furtive movements of two crabs. They will observe how the first pursues the second sideways across the tank and makes a clutch with

his claw, how the second eludes this and in his turn chases his opponent off. "This grotesque manœuvre, my dear boys," the Pastor will declaim, "may remain in your minds as an example of what later you will be called upon to do if you are called to serve your country in Parliament."

The youngsters will soon forget all about it, as is the fashion of boys with their lessons; but something, I think, will remain in the mind, though half obscured by time. And when they come to the vast affairs of which Westminster is the theatre, the object-lesson of the two crabs will not be without service to them.

Bribery, I take it, should not be taught except in the point of degree, for it comes naturally enough to all men both to give and to take bribes, and all that you need fix in the young mind is the double importance of avoiding avarice upon the one side and lavishness upon the other. For the *taking* of a bribe no art or training whatsoever is required, but in the *giving* of bribes it is of some importance not to give too much, and of absolutely vital importance not to offer too little. It is upon this last point that many a noble career has made shipwreck.

I have in mind one poor fellow whose father had left him a few millions. He was perpetually putting down, with all manner of hesitation, sums just insufficient to purchase the object of his desires. In the long run he had disbursed what should easily have commanded a high administrative position in the Cabinet, a Viceroyalty or a first-class Embassy. Yet he had nothing to show for it all but one private secretaryship, two chairmanships of committee, and a baronetcy: and this last only because he was childless.

On Kind Hearts being More than Coronets

THAT is true. But a friend having remarked to me that Cash was more than kind hearts, I put the thing down in a formula for myself, thus,

Cash > Kind Hearts > Coronets

and sat gazing at it for a long time, until it awoke other thoughts in me.

And the first was this : " 'Kind hearts are more than Coronets.' What an intolerably bad line ! What a shocking line—or rather, half-line ! What an outrage ! "

When verse is concerned one must not mince matters. It is too sacred. One must have no reservations. One must ride roughshod over one's nearest and dearest, and proclaim bad verse aloud, and say, " Aroint ! Honi ! "

No reverend name, no illustrious label half-mixed with the State itself, should deter one. Nothing should impede the truth on bad verse save a substantial offer of money—and where is the chance of that in such a galley ?

No ! It is prime duty. Having the thing before you, having seen it, whether your opinion is asked

or no, speak out at once and say : " Madam, this is not poetry, it is verse. It is not good verse ; it is bad verse."

And what wickedly bad verse !

I remember coming down on to Stamford one July morning (I was following the Roman road across Burleigh Park, and so down to the river), when I saw in the window of a little shop among the first houses of the town, hither of the bridge, a card ; an ornamented card ; a florally ornamented card, put up for sale. It was a set of verses all about a rich man who owned Burleigh, that great house, and who married a young woman much poorer than himself. I read them and paid little attention to them. I thought they were some local thing made up to sell in a charity. But a little way on I found another set in another window, and then another, all just the same. I read them again, and something familiar echoed in my mind ; something of childhood . . . I sought. . . . There was an odd connexion with " Locksley Hall." Yet what had " Locksley Hall " to do with Burleigh ? Then it broke in on me like an evil-doer breaking sacred locks : Tennyson ! Tennyson had written this amazing thing !

And so he did " Lady Clara Vere de Vere." And in Lady Clara comes " Kind hearts = Coronets + K " (" K " being some positive number)—I had found it !

The answer to all those who ask why great poets (and especially our great poets, and especially our modern great poets) write rubbish is as old as the Higher Criticism. It is because a poet is only a man used by the gods. It is not the man himself who is the poet. He is only the reed. Those Good

More than Coronets

Poets who don't publish their Bad Verse along with their Poetry are only those who happen to be good critics *and* at the same time very keen on their reputation as verse-writers. All good Poets have written execrable verse, but as to who writes Poetry I will tell you : it is a god.

A lot might be written, by the way (but I will not write it), on the different kinds of bad verse put out by Good Poets. The " Kind hearts and Coronets " monstrosity is quite, quite different from Wordsworth's prose, or Corneille's dotage. Some might say that each great poet had his own kind of bad verse. It is not so. Their bad verse is not good enough to be individual. They do it in commonplace groups ; and I suppose each falls into the group natural to him when the god is not blowing through the reed ; or when it proves a broken reed. Thus Hugo left un-godded becomes mere rhetoric and Milton, a stately painter at the best, a tiresome tractarian at the worst—as in the theological bits of " Paradise Regained." Horace (I think—I won't look it up) said that a poet was such that however bad a line might be, you felt the poet in it. If Horace said that, or if anyone said that, it isn't true. But talking of truth, " kind hearts are more than coronets " is quite true, and I can imagine that truth being put into fine verse—even into poetry, if and when the god should feel inclined . . . and here I pause to praise you, Phœbus Apollo, my protector, my leader, my Capitan ; but you have a way of quitting ; you leave them in the Scæan Gate. . . .

There is nothing against Truth being expressed in Poetry, even though most Poetry is lies.

" *Nox est perpetua una dormiunda* " is Poetry

—though it is sternly true ; at least, it is half true

And " between a sleep and a sleep " is Poetry, and so is " Our little life is rounded with a sleep " . . . where the operative word is " rounded."

(" Every English sentence, Gentlemen," said the Professor to his class, " contains an *operative word.* For instance, in the sentence : ' Every gentleman who hits a cocoanut will receive a good cigar,' the operative word is not ' gentleman,' but ' good.' ")

So also is both Poetry and profoundly true that line of granite :

L'amour est un plaisir, l'honneur est un devoir,

which I quote again and again ; though I suppose a great many people will say it is not Poetry at all, and cannot be, because it is written in a foreign language. Well ! Well !

So is also :

Dead honour risen out-does love at last.

That also is Poetry, though in the more formal manner. But that last line has this drawback about it ; which is, that only those who have lived to a certain age and in a certain way can know the truth of it ; and that those who have not lived the truth of it will not make much of it anyhow. Young people will make nothing of it, nor those who have become old blamelessly, of whom a great number are to be found to this day in the outlying parts and among seafaring men.

But I say that truth is no bar to poetry, nor bad verse to truth either. And I say that this half-line of horribly bad verse, " kind hearts are more than coronets," is as true as true.

Which of you, O my companions, having drunk the wine of this world and half-despaired would not rather fetch up in your dereliction against a kind heart than a coronet ? I don't say the two combined are to be despised. I only ask : Which of you having strictly to choose in the dark passage of this life between : (*a*) a coronet with a bad heart ; (*b*) a kind heart without a coronet—wealth being equal—would not choose (*b*) ? I would. So would you all. I cannot answer for women, but as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain said, " I know my own people," and the bearded ones (or those who would be bearded but for the detestable necessity of shaving) will with one moaning voice reply : " Kind Hearts ! . . . No, thank you ; I do not feel inclined for a Coronet this evening ; bring me a Kind Heart."

Which of you, O my brethren, having suffered the things of this world and finding yourself sitting lonely on the bank of a stream in some forest place would not desire to have approach him, rather than a shallow, silly, boring, untenacious, stupid, cranky, ill-tempered, nagging, sour, pinched, haggard woman with a little coronet on her wig, a warm, a just, an experienced, a tender, an at-the-right-time-silent, a speaking-the-unexpected-word-of-salvation-at-the-Heaven-sent-moment, true, profoundly-loving, sufficiently admiring, comforting, regally beautiful woman with a kind heart ? Which of you would not leave the first to approach the second ? (Supposing, of course, equal incomes.)

It is as true a thing as ever was said. But it was said badly. He ought not to have attempted it in metre until he was feeling in the mood.

I can hear arguments on the other side. A coronet is more amenable to the will of man. You

can buy a coronet. You cannot buy a kind heart. To call kind hearts "better" than coronets, therefore, is like calling fine weather "better" than a good boat. For the sea the boat is more important than the weather. You can guarantee the one, you can't the other. You can make sure of your coronet, but not of your kind heart.

Again, a coronet does not change or fade—money being always taken for granted. It is incorruptible. It is not subject to our poor mortal years; but what it is on the brow of the infant, that it remains on the senile and wrinkled front of him last ticked off to answer questions in the House of Lords; but a Kind Heart! . . . Oh! Chronos!

Again, a coronet is heritable. A kind heart hardly so. A coronet is definable. All are agreed upon it. It is there or it is not there, and that's an end of it. Not so the Kind Heart. One having seized on a companion for ever, and all on account of a Kind Heart, many will say, "I can't for the life of me discover what he (she) saw in her (him) to make him (her) marry her (him)." But no one ever says that of a coronet. They may wonder what the coronet saw in the non-coronet, but never what the non-coronet saw in the coronet. When the fellow (or the wench) mates upwards with a coronet everybody knows why; it's plain sailing and there can be no dispute. A coronet, I say, is something objective, substantial, real. It is made of ashwood covered with plush, it has spikes and each spike a ball on the top. But who shall define a Kind Heart? It is one thing to one man, one to another; it is elusive; it is all in the mind like the Metaphysician's Donkey.

More than Coronets

More: a Coronet of itself can bring about no evil. It is good in itself absolutely. It conveys a definitely good thing, enjoyable to those who enjoy it and at the worst indifferent to those who do not. It is a steady, unmixed, absolute pleasure to its owner and to others. But a Kind Heart? No! A kind heart suffers; and it causes suffering —more than it heals. It makes its owner as often as not despised, always taken advantage of. It is a perilous, uncertain thing.

Nevertheless, I return to my original judgment; kind hearts *are* more than coronets. They are less rare; they are more easily captured; they are much cheaper—yet they are more. One may put them somewhere between coronets and good verse, but, of course, nowhere near Poetry.

. . . . . .

"Oh! Sir!" cries the Reader of Proofs, "have you verified your references in all this?"

"No, My Child, nor will I. It is an extra labour, and should be charged overtime. Let them go."

On Mumbo-Jumbo

MUMBO-JUMBO is that department in the ruling of men which is made of dead, false apparatus; unreasonable; contemptible to the free; unworthy of authority—and Mumbo-Jumbo is the most necessary ingredient in all government.

All government is by persuasion. Odd it is that so many do not yet see this! Perhaps not so odd after all; for words trick the mind, and the words of government are not the words of persuasion.

But think of the matter for a moment, and you will see that government is of necessity by persuasion. Here I catch the voices of two men, an ass and his uterine brother—that sort of braying centaur, half a rational being and half an ass. The ass tells me that government is merely the use of force; the centaur, half man, half donkey, tells me that it lives by the threat of force.

Well, take an example. I come to a properly governed State: a State, that is, where government is taken for granted and obeyed; why is it so? Because that government works for the good of the Governed. But an individual desiring to break a commandment even in such a state refrains only from fear of force? True;

but who executes that force? Not the person who gave the command; not one man—for one is not strong. No, what executes the force is many; and how are many got to obey the will of one? It is by a process of suggestion, dope; that is, persuasion. While men were persuaded of the rights of private property, private property stood secure. Now that they are in transition it is insecure. If ever they are persuaded that private property is an injury, the institution will no longer be merely insecure; it will perish; and no amount of force will save it. It will perish as a general institution and only millionaires and the mass of their servile dependents will remain.

Now, in this function of persuasion (which is the life of government) mark the imperative power of Mumbo-Jumbo! And mark it not only in political government, but in all those subsidiary forms of government (or persuasion) by which one mind influences another and directs it towards an end not originally its own. When the Police were on their last strike (I forget when it was—they succeed each other and will probably continue), an aged woman of means said in my hearing—seeing a batch go by in civilian clothes —"Surely those can't be policemen!" By these words did the Crone prove how powerfully Mumbo-Jumbo had worked upon her mind. For her the Policeman was the helmet, the coat, the belt.

With soldiers it is even more so (I am prepared to defend the use of this elliptic idiom in private when next I have the leisure). Men used to wearing some particular accoutrement cannot regard another accoutrement as military; what is more,

it is with difficulty—unless their profession is to judge armies—that they can see any military qualities in human beings clothed too much out of their fashion. When I was in garrison in the town of Toul in the year 1891, there came an English circus, with the men of which I made friends at once, for I had not heard English for a weary while. One of them said to me sadly: "They seem to have a lot of military about here, but they are not real soldiers." I have no doubt that if you got a man out of the fourteenth century and showed him suddenly a modern regiment in peace (without tin hats), he would think they were lackeys or pages; certainly not soldiers.

Once and again in the history of mankind has there arisen *Iconoclasm*, which is but a fury against Mumbo-Jumbo. There was a great outburst of it throughout the West at the end of the eighteenth century. Men were too classic then to break statues with hammers, but they were all for tearing the wigs off Judges and the crowns off Kings and patchwork off Lords and Clowns, and for getting rid of titles, and the rest of it. They argued thus—"Such things are unworthy of Authority and even of men. They are lies: they therefore degrade us." And they foamed at the mouth.

Ah, witless! All these things had a strict, even a logical connection with public function. You may put it easily in two syllogisms: (1) Without Mumbo-Jumbo there is no permanent subconscious impression upon the mind, but without some permanent subconscious impression upon the mind there is no permanent persuasion; therefore, without Mumbo-Jumbo there is no persuasion.

Now (2) without persuasion there is no government. Therefore (to take a short cut) there is no government without Mumbo-Jumbo. And those excellent men, of whom my own ancestry, French, English, Irish and American, were composed ("And what," you will say, "has that to do with the matter?" Nothing), having got rid of Mumbo-Jumbo in a greater or less degree—less in England, more in France, most in America—immediately proceeded to set it up again.

Carefully did they scoop out the turnip, carefully did they light the candle within, carefully did they dress it up in rags and tinsel, and set it on its pole: there it stands to-day.

Flags in particular got a spurt through the slump in Kings. Formal play-acting in public assemblies got a vast accession through the contempt of Lords; and now, after a hundred years, we have so much fiddle-faddle of ceremonious "rules" and "Honourable gentlemen" and "law of libel" and uniform here and uniform there that the State is now omnipotent, thanks to Mumbo-Jumbo, god and master of the broken Human Heart.

Of the Mumbo-Jumbo of the learned in foot-notes I shall later write. And (as you will discover) I shall write also of the Mumbo-Jumbo of technical words—a most fascinating department of my subject.

The Mumbo-Jumbo of the learned is indeed the very life of all teaching, of all academic authority. A man never teaches so well as when he is dressed up in a teaching fashion, and even those who still foolishly refuse so to dress him up (I quote with sorrow the Sorbonne) none the less put him

on a raised platform; and he is better with a desk, and I think he is the better also with a certain artificial voice. The really great teachers also invent a certain artificial expression of face and affected unnatural accent, which they adopt at the beginning of a lecture and try to drop at the end of it; but in the process of years these get fixed and may be recognized at a hundred yards. For Mumbo-Jumbo holds his servants tight.

So also the authority of religion is badly wounded unless you have an archaic language; and every religion whatsoever adopts one as soon as it can. Some say that the most powerful of these instruments is a dead language; others say old, odd, mouldy forms of a living language, but at any rate Mumbo-Jumbo is of the essence of the contract.

Then there is the Mumbo-Jumbo of command: Thackeray used to ridicule it with the phrase "Shaloo-Hump!" or some such sounds, and there is, as we all know, "Shun" rapidly shouted, and many another. But anyone who has had to drill recruits will admit that he would never have got them drilled at all if instead of using these interesting idols of language he had given his commands in a rational and conversational tone with hesitation and urbanity.

Note you the Mumbo-Jumbo which may everywhere be classed under the term "Official." A common lie has no such effect as a lie with "Official" at the top in brackets. Yet no one could tell you exactly what "Official" meant. It suggests only this: that the news has been given by the Officer of some organization. Thus, if you say that a man has been declared mad, and put "Official," you mean that two members of the Doctors'

Guild have been at work; or, if you are told that a funeral will not take place ("Official") you mean that a member of the Undertakers' Union has given you the information, or perhaps even a member of the family of the dead man. In this class we must also put the two phrases "By Order" (used in this country) and "Tremble and Obey," which, till recently stood (I understand) at the foot of Chinese documents.

"By Order" is a Mumbo-Jumbo pearl! How often in lonely walks through the London streets have I mused within my own dear mind and marvelled at "By Order." When I read for instance "No Whistling Allowed (By Order)" I wonder who gave the order and how he climbed to such a novel power. How came he so strong that he could prevent my whistling or in any other way enlivening London? And why did he hide his magic name? I take it that he had no vulgar legal power, but something more compelling and more mysterious, a priestly thing. And there are others. People who own more than 2,000 acres of land love to paint "By Order" in black letters on little white boards. With these they ornament the boundaries of their possessions.

Mumbo-Jumbo has this defect, that if the spell fails through unfamiliarity it looks grotesque; therefore is it essential for all governments to shoe-horn any new Mumbo-Jumbo very carefully into its place.

It must begin with some little habit, hardly acknowledged, hardly noticeable, and it must only gradually grow into admitted authority. Turn Mumbo-Jumbo on too suddenly and people would only laugh. And while I think of it let

me say that *paint* is a main incarnation of Mumbo-Jumbo; paint with varnish—the complete form of paint. People who sail boats know this very well. I will buy you for a few pounds a very rotten old hulk, abandoned in Hamble River, I will stop up the leaks with cement, paint her sides a bright colour, varnish the paint and then varnish her decks, and sell her at an enormous profit. It is done continually; lives are lost through it, of course; the boat bursts asunder in the midst of the sea; but the cheat never fails. Those who understand the art of horse dealing (which I do not) assure me that much the same thing attaches to that also. It seems there are poisons which you can give a horse whereby it acquires a glossy coat, and that even the eyes of the stupid beast can be made vivacious after long dullness. It may be so.

But of all the Mumbo-Jumbos, that which I admire most, because of its excess and potency combined, is the Mumbo-Jumbo of wine. One would think that in such a matter, where the senses are directly concerned, and where every man can and should act for himself, there was no room for this element in persuasion. It would be an error so to think. There is not one man in a hundred who is not almost entirely guided in a matter of wine by Mumbo-Jumbo. There is here the Mumbo-Jumbo of particular terms, very well-chosen metaphors, and a man is told that a Wine is "full," or "curious," or "dry," or "pretty," or "sound," or something of that kind, and even as he tastes the ink he does not doubt, but believes.

And there is the Mumbo-Jumbo of the years

("This is a '75 Brandy!"—What a lie!), and there is the Mumbo-Jumbo of labels. And there is the arch-Mumbo-Jumbo of little wicker baskets and dust. And the whole of that vast trade, the source of so much pleasure and profit to mankind, floats upon an ocean of Mumbo-Jumbo. Most of the claret you drink is either a rough Algerian wine filled out with dirty water of great Garonne, or wine from the Hérault, or the two mixed. But Lord! what names and titles the concoction bears, including the Mumbo-Jumbo of "Bottled at the Chateau."

And do you think that men would be happier in the drinking of wine if they dropped all this? They would not; and that for two reasons. First, that this would be making them work. They would have to judge for themselves. It would be calling upon them for Effort, and that is hateful to all mankind. Secondly, without the Mumbo-Jumbo, most men would not know whether they were enjoying the wine or not. Therefore I say let Mumbo-Jumbo flourish—and even increase—if that be possible.

Let Mumbo-Jumbo flourish, not only in the matter of wine, and not only in the matter of learning, and not only in the matter of positive government (where it is absolutely *essential*), and not only in the falsehoods of the daily Press, and not only in the Ecclesiastical affair, nor only in that still more Mumbo-Jumbo world of sceptical philosophy, but also in all the most intimate personal relations of men. I am for it! I am for it! I am for it! Born a Mumbo-Jumboite, I propose to die in the happy air which surrounds my nourishing Divinity.

On Foot-notes

IT is pleasant to consider the various forms of lying, because that study manifests the creative ingenuity of man and at the same time affords the diverting spectacle of the dupe. That kind of lying which, of the lesser sorts, has amused me most is the use of the foot-note in modern history.

It began with no intention of lying at all. The first modest foot-note was an occasional reinforcement of argument in the text. The writer could not break his narrative; he had said something unusual; he wanted his reader to accept it; and so he said, in little, "If you doubt this, look up my authority so and so." That was the age of innocence. Then came the serpent, or rather a whole brood of them.

The first big man I can find introducing the first considerable serpent is Gibbon. He still uses the foot-note legitimately as the occasional reinforcement of a highly challengeable statement, but he also brings in new features.

I do not know if he is original in this. I should doubt it, for he had not an original mind, but was essentially a copier of the contemporary French writers and a pupil of Voltaire's. But,

anyhow, Gibbon's is the first considerable work in which I find the beginnings of the earliest vices or corruptions of the foot-note. The first of these is much the gravest, and I must confess no one has used it so well as Gibbon; he had genius here as in much else. It is the use of the foot-note to take in the plain man, the ordinary reader. Gibbon abounds in this use.

His favourite way of doing this is to make a false statement in the text and then to qualify it in the foot-note in such words that the learned cannot quarrel with him, while the unlearned are thoroughly deceived. He tells you in the text that the thing was so certainly, when he very well knows that it was not, and that if there is a scrap of evidence for it, that evidence is bad. Then he puts in a foot-note, a qualification of what he has just said in the text, so that the critic who really knows the subject has to admit that Gibbon knew it too. As though I should write "The Russians marched through England in 1914," and then put a foot-note, "But see the later criticisms of this story in the accurate and fanatical Jones." At other times Gibbon bamboozles the ordinary reader by a reference which *looks* learned and *is* inane; so that your plain man says, "Well, I cannot look up all these old books, but this great man has evidently done so."

A first-rate example of both these tricks combined in Gibbon is the famous falsehood he propagated about poor St. George, of whom, Heaven be witness, little enough[1] is known without having false stories foisted upon him. You will find

[1] I should have said, *nothing*.

it in his twenty-third chapter, where he puts forward the absurd statement that St. George was identical with George of Cappadocia, the corrupt and disgraceful bacon-contractor and the opponent of St. Athanasius.

This particular, classical example of the Evil Foot-Note is worth quoting. Here are the words :[1] "The infamous George of Cappadocia has been transformed into the renowned St. George of England."

And here is the foot-note :

This transformation is not given as absolutely certain but as extremely probable. See *Longueruana*, Tom. I, p. 194.

That foot-note at once "hedges"—modifies the falsehood in the text *and* assumes peculiar and recondite learning. That long title "Longueruana" sounds like the devil and all ! You will be surprised to hear that the reference is to a rubbishy book of guess-work, with no pretence to historical value, run together by a Frenchman of the eighteenth century ; from this Frenchman did Gibbon take the absurdity of St. George originating with George of Cappadocia. I was at the pains of looking this up—perhaps the first, and certainly the last, of my generation to do so.

Another vice of the foot-note (equally illustrated in that lie of Gibbon's about St. George) is what I may call its use as the "foot-note of exception." It is universal to-day. You say something which is false and then you quote in a foot-note one

[1] This is a good opportunity, observe :—Gibbon, *Dec. and Fall of Rom. Emp.* Ed. 1831 (Cassell), Cap. XXIII, Par. 27, n. 125. Does it not look impressive ?

or more authorities supporting it. Anyone can do it: and if the reader is reasonably ignorant of the subject the trick always succeeds Thus, one might say that the earth was flat and put in a foot-note two or three references to the flat-earth pamphlets of which I have a little collection at home. I am told that a wealthy lady, the widow of a brewer, supported the Flat-Earth society which published these tracts and that upon her death it collapsed. It may be so.

The next step of the foot-note in iniquity was when it became a mask. Who started this I know not, but I should imagine that the great German school which remodelled history in the nineteenth century was to blame. At any rate their successors the French are now infinitely worse. I have seen a book purporting to be a history in which of every page not more than a quarter was text, and the rest a dreary regiment of references. There is no doubt at all about the motives, mixed though they are. There is the desire of the fool to say, "Though I can't digest the evidence, yet I *know* it. Here it is." There is the desire of the timid man to throw up fortification. There is the desire of the pedant to show other pedants as well as the general reader (who, by the way, has almost given up reading such things, they have become so dull) that he also has been in Arcadia.

I notice that when anything is published without such foot-notes, the professional critic—himself a foot-noter of the deepest dye—accuses the author of romancing. If you put in details of the weather, of dress and all the rest of it, minutely gathered from any amount of reading, but refuse to spoil

a vivid narrative with the snobbery and charlatanism of these perpetual references, the opponent takes it for granted that you have not kept your notes and cannot answer him; and indeed, as a rule, you have not kept your notes and you cannot answer him.

For the most part, these enormous, foolish, ill-motived accretions are honest enough in their actual references, for the greater part of our modern historians who use them are so incapable of judgment and so lacking in style, so averse from what Rossetti called "fundamental brain-work," that they have not the power to do more than shovel all their notes on you in a lump and call it history. But now and then this temptation to humbug produces its natural result, and the references are false.

The late Mr. Andrew Lang used to say that the writer who writes under the pseudonym of "Anatole France" must have had his foot-notes for his Life of Joan of Arc done by contract. The idea opens up a wide horizon. A man of name would sit down to write a general history of something of which he had a smattering, and would then turn it over to a poor man who would hack for him in the British Museum and find references —and they could always be found—for pretty well any statement he had chosen to make.

At any rate, in this particular case of Anatole France's *Joan of Arc* Andrew Lang amply proved that the writer had never read his original authorities, though he quoted them in heaps.

And that reminds me of another foot-note vice (the subject is a perfect jungle of vices!), which is the habit of copying other people's foot-notes.

I did it myself when I was young; I was lured into it by Oxford and I ask pardon of God and man. It is very common, and a little ingenuity will hide one's tracks. A learned man who was also civilized and ironical—but much too sparing in wine—told me once this amusing story.

He was reading up an economic question, and he found himself perpetually referred to a pamphlet of the late seventeenth century wherein was a certain economic statement upon the point of his research. Book after book referred him to this supposed statement, but he being, as I have said, a learned, civilized, and ironical man (though too sparing in wine) concluded from his general knowledge—and very few learned men have general knowledge—that, in the words of the Old Kent Road murderer, "There must be some mistake." He couldn't believe any seventeenth-century pamphlet had said what this oft-quoted pamphlet was made responsible for.

He proceeded to look up the pamphlet, the references to which followed him about like a dog through all his research. He found there were two copies—and only two. One was in a certain public library, the other in a rich man's house. The public library was far off, and the rich man was nearer by—an hour's journey in the train. So he wrote to the rich man and asked him whether he might look at this pamphlet in the library which his ancestors had accumulated, but to which the rich man had added nothing, being indeed indifferent to reading and writing. The rich man very politely answered that his library had unfortunately been burnt down, and that the pamphlet had been burnt with it. Whereupon the learned man was at the

pains of taking a long journey to consult the copy kept in the public library. He discovered two things: (*a*) that the copy had never been used at all—it was uncut; (*b*) that the references always given had hardly any relation to the actual text. Then did he, as is the habit of all really learned people, go and waste a universe of energy in working out the textual criticism of the corruption, and he proved that the last time anyone had, with his own eyes, really seen that particular passage, instead of merely pretending that he had seen it, was in the year 1738—far too long ago! Ever since then the reference had been first corrupted and then copied and recopied its corrupted form by the University charlatans.

But I myself have had a similar experience (as the silent man said when his host had described at enormous length his adventure with the tiger). I was pursued for years by a monstrous piece of nonsense about some Papal Bull forbidding chemical research: and the foot-note followed that lie. It was from Avignon that the thing was supposed to have come. It seemed to me about as probable as that Napoleon the Third should have forbidden the polka. At last—God knows how unwillingly! —I looked the original Bull up in the big collection printed at Lyons. It was as I had suspected. The Bull had nothing whatever to do with chemical experiments. It said not a word against the honest man who produces a poison or an explosive mixture to the greater happiness of the race. It left the whole world free to pour one colourless liquid into another colourless liquid and astonish the polytechnic with their fumes. What it *did* say was that if anybody went about collecting

lead and brass under the promise of secretly turning them into silver and gold, that man was a liar and must pay a huge fine, and that those whom he had gulled must have their metal restored to them—which seems sound enough.

Here you will say to me what is said to every reformer: "What would you put in its place if you killed the little foot-note, all so delicate and compact? How could you replace it? How can we know that the historian is telling the truth unless he gives us his references? It is true that it prevents history from being properly written and makes it, to-day, unreadable. It is true that it has become charlatan and therefore historically almost useless. But you must have some guarantee of original authority. How will you make sure of it?"

I should answer, let a man put his foot-notes in very small print indeed at the end of a volume, and, if necessary, let him give specimens rather than a complete list. For instance, let a man who writes history as it should be written—with all the physical details in evidence, the weather, the dress, colours, everything—write on for the pleasure of his reader and not for his critic. But let him take sections here and there, and in an appendix show the critic how it is being done. Let him keep his notes and challenge criticism. I think he will be secure. He will not be secure from the anger of those who cannot write clearly, let alone vividly, and who have never in their lives been able to resurrect the past, but he will be secure from their destructive effect.

A Few Kind Words to Mammon

A FRIEND of mind once wrote a parable ("and if these words should meet his eye," etc.). I have not seen it written down. It may have been written down. But in its verbal form it was something like this (as it was told to me).

A number of candidates were offered what they would choose. But they could choose only one thing each. The first chose health. And the second, beauty. And the third, virtue. And the fourth, form. And the fifth, ticklishness, which means an active sense. And the sixth, forgetfulness. And the seventh, honesty. And the eighth, immunity from justice. And the ninth, courage. And the tenth, experience. And the eleventh, the love of others for him. And the twelfth, his love for others. But the thirteenth (they were thirteen, including Judas,) chose *money*. And he chose wisely, for in choosing this, all the others were added unto him.

If ever I complete that book which I began in the year 1898 called "Advice to a Young Man" (I was twenty-eight years of age at the moment I undertook it) it will there be apparent by example, closely reasoned argument, and (what is more convincing than all) rhetoric, that money is the true source of every delight, satisfaction, and repose.

Do not imagine that, upon this account, I advise the young to seek money in amounts perpetually extending. Far from it! I advise the young (in this my uncompleted book) to regulate their thirst for money most severely.

"Great sums of money" (said I, and say I) "are only to be obtained by risking ruin, and of a hundred men that run the risk ninety-nine get the ruin and only one the money." But money as a solid object; money pursued, accumulated, possessed, enjoyed, bearing fruit: that is the captain good of human life.

When people say that money is only worth what it will purchase, and that it will purchase only certain things, they invariably make a category of certain material things which it will purchase, and imagine or hope that it will purchase no more. And these categories, remember, are drawn up always by unmoneyed men. For your moneyed man has no need to work and therefore no need to draw up categories, which is a very painful form of toil. They say money will purchase motor-cars and bathrooms—several bathrooms—and foods and drinks and the rest of it—and then its power is exhausted.

These fools leave out two enormous chapters—the biggest chapters of the lot. They leave out the services of other men, always purchasable. And they leave out the souls of other men, often purchasable. With money in a sufficient amount you can purchase any service, and with money you can purchase many individual souls.

Now, that is important.

Take the purchasing of services with money. You start a newspaper. Perhaps you cannot write

very well yourself. I have known very many extremely rich men whose writing was insignificant —never persuasive or enduring in effect. The greater part of them cannot write for more than a few minutes without breaking down. Just as an elderly man cannot play Rugby football for more than a few minutes or so without breaking down. But they can hire men to write. And they do. They do not exactly buy the souls of those men they hire. They only buy the services. Often enough have I had a pleasant talk with one of these serfs in private when his daily task was done (at from one to three thousand a year) concerning the vices of his master and the follies which he (the serf) had had to defend with his pen.

But to be able to purchase the services of men thus (I am only speaking of my own trade, but all other trades are equally purchasable, and the lawyers actually *advertise* that they are purchasable !)—to be able, I say, to purchase services thus is a category ridiculously neglected by those who pretend that money brings nothing but material enjoyment.

It brings, for instance, immunity from the criminal law. At least it does to-day. It did not until modern times even here, but it does to-day. If you doubt it, take a little bit of paper and mark the men who have been sent to prison during your own lifetime *while* possessed (not *after having been* possessed) of five thousand a year. It is an instructive winter game.

But if money can purchase services it can also, with less certitude, but on a very large scale, purchase those other little things we noted—the souls of men.

Here there is a distinction.

When you purchase a service you do not necessarily purchase a soul. You only purchase a soul when, by the action of your money, you corrupt the individual. I do not say "corrupt him beyond all salvation," but, at any rate, beyond any remaining desire for salvation. When, for instance, by the possession of money, you acquire the respect of a man, you are, to a small extent, purchasing his soul. When by the action of money you make a man fall into certain habits which at last become his character, you are purchasing a soul.

I keep on saying "you," though I know well enough, wretched reader, that you are in no position to do all this. In fact, you find it the devil and all to purchase what is necessary for your household. If you are a man with a thousand a year, for instance (there have just passed my window three men with a good deal less, not judged by their clothes but by my knowledge of them in a countryside), then you are worth what was called before the war about four hundred pounds a year. Taxation and Inflation, the twin gods that rhyme, have done for the rest.

If you are what they called before the war a rich man (you will excuse me, but random essays are read by all sorts of people), if you were, say, a squire with six thousand a year, you are now worth what your local scribbler at two thousand a year was worth before the war. Horrible but true. So when I say "you" I only do so by way of rhetoric and of shorthand. I cannot be pestered to know what each of you is exactly worth, and, upon my soul, as things now are, I do not think any one of you exactly knows.

To return. I say that money, acting thus, purchases souls. It purchases souls not only in regardant, but in gross. In regardant, I may explain, means "as regards the particular relation between one soul and its purchaser," while in gross means "of the world in general."

Thus a man may be a serf regardant when he is a serf to a particular lord, but not a serf in his general status. Or he may be a serf in gross, that is, a serf to anybody who comes across him. And in the same way, there is a cad regardant and a cad in gross, and still more is there a coward regardant and a coward in gross. For instance, a man may be a general coward, and that is being a coward in gross, or he may be a particular coward in the matter of riding a particular horse, and then he is only a coward regardant.

I say, then, that the power of your money to purchase souls may be in gross or regardant. It may purchase a particular soul, in which case, God help you! Or it may have a general effect upon All Souls (I mean not the College but the generality of mankind, for whom I postulate souls), and in this case you are not perhaps very much to blame. It is rather their fault than yours.

When your money has purchased souls in gross—gross souls in gross and grossly purchased by the gross—it means that you are worshipped for your money, and this is as common a worship as the worship men give to their country.

There is a kind of insufficiency—I had almost called it idiocy—which tries to shuffle out of this valuable truth by pointing to particular cases (there are perhaps half a dozen at one time in a great community like ours) of men who, possessing

great wealth, are yet not respected. But you will find that these are exceptions who have deliberately done all that they could not to be respected. The ruck of men with large fortunes are respected for all those things which money is supposed to bring—justice, kindliness, humour, temperance, courage and judgment. And even the very few rich men who are not respected are still admired for some mystical quality. "There must have been something in the man for him to have made half a million before he was forty."

I should have said, "There must have been something lacking in other men for this guttersnipe to have got so much out of them," but I am here deliberately the devil's advocate, and I know that I have not a leg to stand on.

If you are possessed of great wealth . . . (Digression: Little wealth is disgusting, like mediocrity in verse. If you are going in for being wealthy you must be very wealthy or not wealthy at all. Anywhere in a plutocracy may you see the very wealthy hobnobbing with poor hack-writers and versifiers and essay writers and such, but never with the quarter-wealthy or the eighth-wealthy) . . . if you are possessed of great wealth, I say you are, in a plutocracy, a great man. You are both loved and feared; everywhere respected and also admired. Your good qualities are as enduring as stone; your evil qualities are either transformed into something slight and humorous or sublimated till they disappear.

There is more than this. Something goes on within yourself. Because you are respected and admired you become more solid. You envisage your faults sanely. You are far from morbid.

If you have the manhood to correct your failings, you correct them temperately. You have poise and grasp. If, more wisely, you indulge your foibles—why, that is a pardonable recreation. Your judgments are well-founded. You are tempted to nothing rash or perilous. You may be led, for the relief of tedium, into some slight eccentricity or other, but that will give you the more initiative and a strong personality: not exactly genius, for genius is a zigzag thing, burning and darting, unsuited to the true greatness of wealth. It has not enough ballast and repose.

What is most important of all, those whose permanent affection you ardently desire, those whose good you crave, those whose respect you hunger for like food, will all of them at once respond to your desire if money backs it. You can give them what they really need, and you can give it them unexpectedly when they really need it. Thus do they associate you with happiness. You, meanwhile, can behave with the leisure that produces their respect. Gratitude will do the rest, or, at any rate, security, and the habit of knowing that from *you* proceeds so much good.

Thus does dear Mammon give us half a Paradise on earth and a fine security within. Mammon is an Immediate Salvation. And the price you pay for that Salvation is not so very heavy after all: only a creeping gloom; a despair, turning iron and threatening to last for ever.

So the whole thing may be summed up in a sentence that runs in my head more or less like this: "Make unto you friends of the Mammon of iniquity that they may receive you into their *everlasting* habitations." My italics.

On Treves

AS I stood in Treves Market-place the other day after an absence of seven years (and the war in between) I could not but wonder whether —since the tide in Europe has turned—the city would not recover what is, if they only knew it. the glory of these German towns : its individual tradition ; its private excellence ; its pride in antiquity.

Treves as an outer frontier thing is unworthy of its history. Treves was never meant to be a dependency of vulgar Prussia. It is as old as Europe. It has, like all those towns of the Rhine basin—of which it is the last Western example—a faculty for preserving what is old and an active tradition within it of the Roman Empire. It was a provincial capital of that Empire just at the moment of the transition before the central government broke down, and the story of it from that time onwards has never been interrupted. There are many modern authorities who pretend (basing their thesis upon guesswork) that Treves and this lower valley of the Moselle was once Celtic—or, as we say to-day, French—that it was just like Toul, or Metz, or Verdun, but that the district was later overflowed by German speech ; that it was invaded. There

is no real or certain evidence for any change in the boundaries of German speech towards the West within recorded time. The various German dialects (which were, of course, not original at the beginning of our recorded history, but were already more than half Latin in their wording) reached to a certain limit which they have not overpassed in two thousand years, but from which also they have not receded. Treves, I take it, was what to-day we call *German* just as much when Priscillian was there condemned as it is to-day.

The stamp of Rome is set upon it very largely, as it is upon everything German west of the central forests and the waste Baltic land. And Treves has the good fortune to have preserved great monuments of that time. The Black Gate is the most famous of them. But I am not sure that the restored Basilica, though most of its bricks are new, does not affect the traveller more.

You might come upon that Basilica of Treves in Ravenna, and it would not be out of place. By a nice irony, its strict, solemn simplicity, its high, blind arches, regular and repetitive, its vast blank of wall, and all that reminds you of the later Cæsars, were given over for use as a garrison church to dull Pomeranium men from hundreds of miles away, a garrison which has now disappeared. By a nice irony, this astounding thing, instinct with Rome, was used for the artificial parade of Prussians who were as little native to Treves as one breed of similarly speaking men could be to another. This great church and the Black Gate at the other end of the town, piled up enormous above the market centre, are the chief standing recollections of that moment when the Empire had just settled

into its Christian mould. They saw St. Martin coming in, as Milan had seen him. They saw the crowds that besieged the Imperial Courts when the Spanish bishop was condemned. They saw the procession that moved out to his beheading.

And there is a third point in Treves which arrests one still more, although it is broken to an old ruin, and that is the remaining decayed defence of the old palace. It has been built up, and re-built up with rough stone, through the Dark Ages, so that now you look at the rude courses and the rough, half-buried arches as you look at a piece of Pevensey or Richborough. But the very fact of its continuous decline in grandeur recalls its continuous use, and you can stand in a roofless room which held in turn the Apostate and the giant Maximin, and which heard the high, piping voice of Charlemagne, incongruous with his tall presence and dignity.

All that great transition from the pagan to the mediæval Europe one feels more at Treves even than one does at Aix ; and this, I suppose, is because the roots of Treves go deeper ; but partly, also, because Treves is more of a border town.

Like every countryside in Europe, this rich pocket in the valley of the Moselle has kept its real spirit, its individual soul, alive underneath the covering of conquest and administration. If Treves were to-morrow to become again, as it was in the past for so many centuries, a State, there would be hardly any change to the eye. The same sharply-cut hills going in succession like cliffs along the valley—the typical hills of Lorraine which Claude loved—would still carry the same terraced vineyards, and the specially Northern cultivation of

the grape would show all its accustomed marks.

As one goes up the valley, one may still see upon one of the sandstone slabs of the steep above the river road, a sign marking the limit of the jurisdiction of the Archbishop, a crozier and a cross deeply carved into the smooth rock. It is a symbol of what Treves was in the past, of its strong local character and individuality. Perhaps some later symbol will mark the resurrection of that spirit.

There is also in the heart of the town something which the people may well boast of as a mark of their Western inheritance. It is the first of the Gothic churches of Germany.

It came surprisingly early. Suger had planted, during the Second Crusade, three miles north of the Gate of Paris, the aboriginal pointed arch from which so vast a revolution in architecture was to spring. You get the cathedral of Notre Dame, and the whole movement of the Isle de France. But this little church, right up against the tremendous cathedral of the Dark Ages, this little church here, hundreds of miles away from the Gallic origin of such things, was begun actually within a hundred years of Suger's innovation! St. Louis was still a boy, and so was Henry III of England, when the first stones of the delicate thing were laid here in Treves. How European and civilized a place it was in those days!

And talking of this church, I came upon something there even more astonishing than its early witness to the Western spirit of Treves. Immediately to the left of the choir I also found a witness of the *endurance* of civilization in Treves—a thing of, I suppose, the other day—a little statue in freestone, of the most heavenly sort: what the will of an

English king prettily called "*Mariolam quemdam*" —"some little Madonna or other."

It seemed to be unknown. There was no reproduction of it in the town. No one had a photograph of it. No one could tell me who had carved it. It looked quite new. It was as good a thing as ever I have seen. And it was here in Treves! It was in a place which finds itself upon the map (as the map still insecurely stands) mixed up with the monstrosities of the monument of Leipsic, the hideous vulgarity of the Hohenzollerns and their palace at Posen (but I forgot—Posen is no longer counted upon the same map; it has been restored to civilization), the comic streets of Berlin.

Seeing such a noble statue there, I thought to myself of what advantage it would be if the people who write about Europe would really travel. If only they would stop going from one large cosmopolitan hotel to another, and giving us cuttings from newspapers as the expressions of the popular soul! If only they would peer about and walk and see things with their eyes!

This little statue to the left of the choir of Treves would be an education for such men. No longer would they talk of Treves as something identical with strange and distant Koenigsberg or as a cousin to base Frankfort. It would no longer be for them a railway station or a dot upon the map. Even as I looked at that statue I bethought myself of that other statue: the enormity at Metz. For, as we all know, the Prussian Government built, or rather plastered, on to the Western porch of Metz a red statue of the late Emperor and Prussian King. He appears as the Prophet Daniel! The rest of the cathedral is of a marvellous and aged grey,

but he is red, carved out of red stone. He is dressed up in a sort of monk's habit with a cowl. His moustaches are turned up fiercely at the end—and yet the statue is solemnly inscribed with that title: "The Prophet Daniel". . . .

These are the things that our generation has seen and that posterity will not believe.

On the Cathedral of Seville and "The Misanthrope"

I, WITHIN one week, experienced, felt, saw and handled with my mind, the two chief creations of the human spirit: a marvellous piece of luck! I heard Mass in Seville Cathedral on an autumn Sunday. The Sunday after I sat at the Français marvelling at *The Misanthrope*.

These two creations, the one in stone, the other in The Verb, are, so far as I know, the summit of our European creative power, and therefore of the world.

They praise the Giralda of Seville, the great tower outside the Cathedral, and they are right. But they are wrong when they praise it with a more or less conscious motive of crying up Islam and running down their own blood. The beauty of the Giralda is not an Islamic beauty, though Islam built the most of it. It is what it is because Europe repairs and finishes. If you doubt it you may go and look at its twin tower, the great Tower of Hassan on the Hill above Rabat. That huge brown tower at Rabat looks over the Atlantic Seas, towards its sister, the Giralda: an imperfect thing looking at a perfected thing: a thing essen-

tially weak because not permanent, looking at a symbol of permanence: a thing destined to ruin looking at a thing destined to life. And I say in the maugre of the teeth of those with whom I disagree that the Giralda would not be the Giralda but for its Christian cap. However, there it stands, useful at least as a contrast. For if the Giralda be very beautiful (as it is), what is it compared to the Cathedral itself? *That* building can never be excelled. Our race once, in one great moment of three centuries, reached its highest level. We shall hardly return to such a summit.

The Gallic spirit had created the Gothic; the unfathomed suggestion of the perfect ogive, of the uplifted arch of 60 degrees, had spread from Paris outward; it had built all the ring of great shrines—Chartres, Beauvais, Amiens, Rheims. It was proceeding in outer circles to Britain, and even to the Rhine and beyond, and on through the Reconquista, southwards, shooting up Burgos like a fire, and planting the nobility of Oviedo and Leon, when the Christian cavalry entered Seville and began the last and the noblest of all those things. What a mood of making, what an enlarging passion to produce and to form and to express, must have possessed the men who through those centuries completed that thing! It is everything from the thirteenth century to the *Reyes Catolicos*; it is everything from St. Ferdinand to Ferdinand and Isabella.

Castille rode in and made this marvellous thing. I wonder what Aragon would have done? Often, as I have gone down the banks of that torrent, which is also a god, and which gave its name to a mighty kingdom, often, as I have gone down

the gorge of the Pyrenees with the Aragon tumbling at my side, I have meditated upon its spirit; broader, I think, less piercing, with more grasp, less thrust, than the chivalry to the west, than the raiders of Castille; suffused, I think, with the Catalan spirit (though they would hate to be told it), and in some way at once less solemn and yet more solid. That was Aragon.

But Aragon had no chance to spread south. It was blocked. It was Castille that rode in and made this thing the Cathedral of Seville. And in making it, Castille made the greatest monument which the race of men can boast.

There is some unexplained power in proportion which not only symbolizes, not only suggests, but actually presents that which has no proportions; the illimitable vastness—Eternity.

There is a mystery about just proportion. It has this magic about it—that it can express at once both the sublime and the merely accurate. It will suggest repose, it will suggest a disdainful superiority to inferior things, it carries a patent of nobility always, but in rare times and places it can also effect what I have said—the vision of the eternal.

A man in the Cathedral of Seville understands the end of his being. He is, while standing there on earth, surrounded by stones and rocks of the earth, with his own body in decay and all about him in decay—he is, in the midst of all this material affair, yet in some side-manner out of it all; he is half in possession of the final truths. Nowhere else in the world, that I know of, has the illimitable fixed itself in material. Divinity is here impetricate.

It is not only proportion that does this at Seville

—it is also multiplicity. It is not only that mark of true creative power—the making of something more than that you meant to make—it is also that other mark of creative power—diversity, endless breeding, burgeoning, foison, which everywhere clothes this amazing result. Seville has not (in proportion to its area, its great space) the actual number of carven things which glorify Brou, the Jewel of the House of Savoy. It has not perhaps any one statue which will match the immortal Magdalen of Brou or her cousin Katherine or the modern and (to my astonishment) German little sandstone Madonna of Treves which I have written of in this book, nor that other Madonna praying to her own self, which for a long time I believed to be the loveliest figure in the world. I mean the one over the Southern porch of Rheims (the barbaric ineptitude missed it and it still remains). But if Seville has not some one statue, it has the effect of multiplicity more greatly developed than any other building I know, and here again you will ask yourself in vain, as the creators of Seville themselves would have asked themselves in vain, how that effect arose. It is so; and there stands Seville. If you would know how silence can be full and how a supreme unity can be infinitely diverse, if you would touch all the mysteries and comprehend them as well as they can be comprehended within the limits of our little passage through the daylight, you must see Seville. But do not go there in Holy Week.

. . . . . .

And *The Misanthrope.*

The supreme art of words is to produce a multiple

and profound effect with simplicity in construction. There is hardly in this masterpiece one phrase which is not the phrase of convention or of daily use. Where the words are not the words that men used, or the sentences the sentences they used at the Court of Louis XIV, then they are the words conventionally used in the heroic couplets of that day. And each character has a set of lines to declaim (not very much), and there is, you may say, no rhetoric, and there is, you may say, no lyric, no deliberate poignancy; one might venture a paradox and say that in *The Misanthrope* there was no " effect," meaning no sudden, sharp, contrasted effect. This mighty comedy of Molière's represents no more than the simplest conjunction, the everyday business of a man who expects too much of mankind, who is in love and expects too much of the lady, who has a friend, a man who gives him good advice, and another friend, a woman, who herself would marry him willingly enough, and who yet advises him quietly and is more a support than a lover. There is hardly any plot—merely the discovery that the young widow for whom the Misanthrope feels such passion is a chatterbox and runs her friends down behind their backs for the sake of tattle. There is the fatuous bad versifier. There are the silly men of the world.

Such are the materials of the *Misanthrope*, common stones: and into them a man did once breathe such life that he made a thing standing quite apart from all his other creations, and something higher than anything any other had accomplished. What depths and further depths! What suggestions to the left and to the right! What

infinite complexity of real character (and just that infinite complexity of real character exists in all of us), shines through those few pages, illumines and glorifies two hours of acting on a stage !

There is perhaps no man intelligent and sensitive and having passed the age of forty who will not, as he watches the acting of *The Misanthrope*, see all that he knows of life passing before him and sounding exactly in tune with the vibrations of his own soul. There is passionate love, intense and disappointed, and there is the foil to passion ; that large, that honest, that domestic thing which rare women possess, and, when they possess it, afford food, sustenance, sacrament to the life of men. There is friendship ; there is the ideal sought and unattained ; there is the disappointment to which all noble souls are doomed. There is all human story put into one little frame. How ? No one can tell how. Molière himself could not have told how.

When those simple words, spoken quickly and in a low tone—" *Morbleu ! Faut-il que je vous aime ?* "—are heard, the man's whole self, his whole past (if he has loved fully), his security, his doubt, all of him respond. Why ? I cannot tell. I only know that the great poets do it, and they themselves do not know how. It is the Muse. It is something divine. It is inspiration.

It is inspiration. That word was justly framed. It would seem that among the few consolations afforded to the miserable race of men, among the little hints of a possible coming Beatitude, the Creator has especially chosen from his storehouse this gem, this priceless gem, of poetical power. I am reminded of it when I read the foolish judg-

ment so often repeated—that the Ancients had no landscape.

" . . . οἳ ῥά μιν ὧκα
θήσουσ' ἐν Λυκίης ἐυρείης πίονι δήμῳ."

When I read that I see what I think Flaxman saw, the sunlight on the Ægean, the Asian hills, and the fertile plain between ; I feel the warmer air. Yet is there not one word which describes these things, unless you except the common word and symbol which says that Lycia is rich. Tennyson did it too : " And the moon was full." So did Byron : " The moon is up and yet it is not night." So did Shakespeare in " gentle and low an excellent thing in women." So did Virgil : " *Et inania regna.*" So do they all.

But Molière in *The Misanthrope* did it *all the time.* It is not single lines (though I have quoted one) ; it is the whole river of the thing, high in flood-tide, up to the top of its banks, broad, deep, majestic, and upon a scale to which (one would have thought) mere man could never reach.

All that !

For two hours, hearing this thing, I was quite outside the world ; and the memory of it is a possession which should endure, I think, for ever ; by which word I mean, even beyond the limitations of this life. But therein I may be wrong.

On the "Bucolics" of Virgil, A Café in Paris, The Length of Essays, Phœbus, Bacchus, A Wanton Maid, and Other Matters

A FRUITFUL subject for discussion in these days of war, foreign and civil, ruin, approaching pestilence, eclipse and veiling of the gods, is the proper place in which to read the *Bucolics* of the poet Virgil.

Some would suggest a pastoral scene—a rising mound near some clear river, or even the shade of a beech. Others a library brown with age, dusty, and (please God) all the windows shut; oaken also, the roof not high, the whole cut up into little compartments each with a wicket-gate as libraries should be. Others would suggest bed—though that connotes a complete acquaintance with the text. Others a railway journey, for on such an occasion the mind is well cut off from interference by modern things: that is, supposing the railway journey to be a fast one between two very distant points—for there is no more distracting passage of time than a journey in a slow train which stops at every station.

Others have suggested ship-board, which seems to me simply silly. For, apart from the difficulty of reading anything at sea, there is the gross unsuitability of time and place for the lovely lines of the Eclogues.

And so on. It is a weighty matter for discussion, and one that can never end, because it all turns upon an individual whim.

But for my part the place where I like to read the *Bucolics* of Virgil is at a table outside the door of a certain café facing the Bourse in Paris; a table in the open air. The time of day in which this exercise most pleases me is about two o'clock of an early summer afternoon.

As to why this should be so, I cannot tell. Locke would explain it perhaps by his "Association of Ideas": but Locke is dead and gone. Perhaps once in boyhood, just in that place or in such a place, I first was struck by the beauty of such and such a line. At any rate, that is the place where now it pleases me to read the immortal stuff: a certain café opposite the Bourse in Paris, sitting at a table in the open air, in summer, with the book before me on a marble slab. There do I best receive within my mind (aided by a crib) the noble outlines of the Apennine, the Lombard Plain, the long shadows at evening, the bleating of the flock.

Some little way before me, as I read, the howling mob, which clamours all afternoon, buying and selling round the colonnade of the Bourse, continues its surge. Individual voices at that distance are lost; all you hear is the sea of human avarice and folly in its violence confused.

Why on earth this singular piece of baseness,

the roar of men buying and selling and picking each other's pockets, should form a suitable background in my mind for the delicate notes of the pipe in the wood and the long regrets of the shepherds, heaven only knows. But so it is.

I wondered only this year as I re-read the heavenly poet in that place (opposite the Bourse in Paris, the Vile Stock Exchange) whether the advance of barbarism might not produce—and that in a very few years—a generation to whom all these lines will be as tedious as is Corneille to the educated Englishman of to-day.

I can imagine men still reasonably cultivated, still in part acquainted with the Latin tongue, and yet fallen into such a degraded mood that only here and there some specially vivid picture or some piece of stronger rhetoric in the Eclogues shall touch them, while the rest will appear mechanical, dry stuff. For there is a degree of descent in the mind after which the magic of verse disappears; and that sacred quality whereby—none can tell how—a particular disposition of words stirs the mind in a fashion that is to common experience what music is to speech, and what colour is to form, no longer effects its purpose.

I was reading the other day in the work of a Colonial, whose amusing conceits we all properly admire and whose honest morals help to make his work pleasant, a most amazing judgment passed by him upon the poet Homer.

It seemed to him that the poet Homer did not write poetry at all. He said it sounded to him, compared with real poetry, modern poetry, live poetry (the Cad's Laureate, let us say), like the rude scratching of a savage knife upon a wall

compared with some glorious work of art, such as a Coronation picture at the Royal Academy. . . . Well, well, well! . . .

Shall I attempt to criticize the Colonial? No, I will not.

The truth is, that when you come to criticize certain modern enormities your instrument fails. The thing is too big for you altogether.

You can pick up a cricket ball with your hand; you can handle a ten-foot spherical buoy with a crane. But how are you to deal with a rounded mass several miles across? How are we to deal with *mountains* of ineptitude? How is criticism to approach those last new literary moods which are deaf to the ancients? I fear it cannot deal with such moods at all. If a man feels like that, he feels like that, and one can say no more. And if there is to come a time when men shall read:

Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem,

and make no more of it than "Passengers must cross the line by the bridge. Penalty £5," why, there it is! Things have their rising and their setting. But before that day comes may the earth cover me.

. . . . . .

If the modern world resembled that ancient one of which the echoes, as I lay down my Virgil, still move my mind, I should here complete, I should here end. For I have said all that I have to say. And a very good thing it would be if the modern world resembled the ancient world in this as in many other things. Their books were ten thousand words long, or twenty thousand

words long, or fifty thousand words long, or a hundred thousand words long. They had not to conform to a special length. And so it was with that which they wrote down, as I am writing this, at random, a vagary of the mind.

But the modern world differs from the ancient world, and there is a law that an essay such as this (essay, forsooth!) should reach a certain length.

There are various ways in which I could pad it out. One of the best would be to quote you a few lines and ask you how you feel. For instance

Et me Phœbus amat: Phœbo sua semper apud me
Munera sunt, lauri et suave rubens hyacinthus.

This is not only a beautiful phrase, it is also true —and I am grateful to the Delian. I will do my best never to put him out. I will keep by me a few flowers for such a patron.

By the way, talking of that lovely couplet, do you know (it is true, it is not a lie, I have the very words before me as I write)—do you know that a gentleman still living translated that couplet thus: "Phœbus loves me and I in my turn have gifts for Phœbus—laurels, and the sweet blush of the hyacinth."

But this is not so wrong a rendering after all as that for which a contemporary of mine was once responsible in the noblest and most learned of the Oxford Colleges. For this man said (viva voce, it is true) that certain Greek lines which really meant "at evening soft dew descends upon the earth" signified in English, "Towards nightfall the huge female sea monster crawls up upon the

sand." Each a picture; the one sweet, the other strong—but how different one from the other!

And as I have begun quoting, why not go on?

Malo me Galatea petit, lasciva puella,
Et fugit ad salices et se cupit ante videri.

You may, if you like, apply this to yourself just as I applied the first lines to myself. At any rate I will have nothing to do with them.

And really I can think of nothing more to say, and I must bring this to an end. . . . But as I write, but as I write, a stream comes down from the mountains, a girl escapes beyond the willow trees.

On Titles

IN those long lists which the divine Rabelais delighted to string together, wherewith also he has inspired many diverse men, Charles Kingsley, Besant, and that remarkable historian York Powell to boot, there is one omitted which I sometimes think Rabelais meant to write and never did ; and that is, the list of books which might well be produced for the advancement and entertainment of mankind.

He did indeed produce a most glorious library of books, collected, if you remember, for the education of the giant, every title in which is a delight ; and much better fun, I think, when you do not know the allusions than when you do. Much better, that is, when you think it was entirely made up out of Rabelais' head than when you get to know that most of it was a parody on existing tomes. But he never gave us a list of books which might exist and do not, and such a list is always running in my head. From time to time I have jotted down a few names for such books, and the regiment of them is now formidable. My only hesitation in publishing it (or rather a fragment of it) is lest some reader should steal my thunder and himself begin writing one of these books. But

I am charitable, and I also have sufficient knowledge of time and space and human conditions to be certain that I cannot in what is left of my life write them all myself, so I may as well throw out the suggestions.

(I.) British Honours. *Being a guide to Literary Gents and Lion Hunters, showing what Official Honours now exist in all States subject to the British Crown, with their Distinctions, Emoluments (if any), Order of Precedence and Method of Address in writing and in speech. As also an Appendix showing the consequences mediate and immediate following on the possession of each of such Honours by any man or woman, and the consequent privileges of rank or custom attaching to their relatives, children and dependents. The whole illustrated by a copious Index with a coloured Frontispiece showing an Earl in his Robes, and sundry diagrams.*

Now, this would be a most useful book, and I do not think I will go on with my list because it is in itself a subject not for one poor essay but for a very pamphlet of examination and discussion.

There never was since the beginning of the world a system of honours more complicated than ours! It is a veritable Chinese puzzle and, like all complexities, it is running riot in its last stage. It is now so thick that you cannot push your way through it. It is an old and true saying that England is an aristocratic State, or, at any rate, was an aristocratic State, i.e. that the historical nature of modern England from the early seventeenth century is that of a polity in which the citizens desire to be governed by a small class and in which such a class exists, or rather has existed, suitable to the demand calling it forth; and therein is seen

the origin at least of the game of "Honours." That is why you have, standing out boldly in the arrangement of our society, the real objects (not phantasms) called a Knight, a Baronet, a Baron, an Earl, a Viscount, a Duke, and their various ladies; and that is why each grade has its own little bunch of appurtenances.

Note how exactly these appurtenances distinguish one step from the next. Your Knighthood and your Baronetcy are not to be confused; for the first is confined to the passage of this poor mortal life, but the second goes on from father to son, and is, as nearly as anything can be in this sad world, imperishable so long as a male heir is to be discovered. Your Baron is not like your Earl, for your Baron's daughters are only Honourables, whereas your Earl's daughters are Ladies. Your Duke is distinguishable by the title common to his successive consorts, not Ladies, but Duchesses. There is not a rung on this heavenward ladder which is not marked with its own stamp, and that is as it should be.

But to this simple hierarchy (resembling, I always think, the Orders of Angels, and like them nine in number—if you include Marquises, Princes and Kings) the appetite of the race has added a vast collection—much the most of it modern. You have the ecclesiastical people, each with his little tag, one being Rev., the other Very Rev., the other Right Rev. You have the distinction between the Vicar and the Rector, a branch of knowledge confined to specialists. You have the Curate, the Rural Dean; on which last the poem runs:

> ,' Lord Archibald I grieve to say
> Was late for breakfast every day,

> And as he slunk upon the scene
> His kind papa—a Rural Dean—
> Would solemnly remark 'My son
> Our morning meal is nearly done
> And grace will very soon be said.'
> Lord Archibald would hang his head
> And drop hot tears upon his plate:
> And yet next morning would be late."

The poet has here taken poetic licence, for it is exceedingly improbable that the son of a Rural Dean would be called Lord Archibald.

But you never can tell! Titles jump sometimes over immense gulfs and land like some wild sea-bird upon the head of a most unexpected person, thereby conferring upon him a mysterious glamour from fairy worlds.

The poet of Lord Archibald has also, apart from poetic licence, been so bold as to point a moral. He shows how an ingrained habit will overcome a good resolution, and therein confirms the very wise remarks of Aquinas, to whose compendium I refer you, for this digression is getting too long.

Still, as I was saying, side by side with the regular Nine Orders, there are the extras; for instance, military and ecclesiastical titles; and talking of military and ecclesiastical titles, these have bred a large swarm of bastard titles, about which I think something ought to be done. For it adds enormously to the worry of the Honours system to have, on top of the multitude of official honours, such unofficial stuff as "General This" and "The Rev. That," the first of whom turns out to be no soldier at all but a sort of Nonconformist parson, and the second no one in any orders, but merely a man who has put on a collar that fastens at the back and who talks at large upon divine affairs.

You may note, by the way, in connexion with Bastard Honours, that one honour and one alone has really got degraded, burst its banks, and flooded the country, and that is the term "Esquire." "Esquire" meant a Shield Bearer, the man who carried the shield for the knight and served. He was less than a knight; but as he did most honourably carry the shield he might be confused with the armed gentry, so if you were not a knight, at any rate you were an "Esq." And not so very long ago the distinction was real. There remain still living, I believe, (but I speak under correction), those who can remember writing their envelopes to a solicitor with the word "Mr." in front, and to a barrister (who might be the solicitor's brother) with the letters "Esq." after the name. But even in our time the thing has broken loose, and is now all over the country. The Government Departments always put Esq. to save trouble, except when they are writing to convicts. They usually do it to women as well, which is saving trouble too much; but even Esq. in this, its last decrepitude, bears strongly the mark of an aristocratic state. For, note you, the unfortunate citizen (unfortunate only in the burden of his duty herein imposed, but fortunate, perhaps, in possessing so much variety in his social life) must try and remember the initial of every male he may write to. It is one of the things that foreigners, if they knew anything about England, would be most astonished at. The other day I wrote thirty-six letters with my own hand, every one of them to people of my own sex, and I suppose I wasted a good quarter of an hour looking up the initial to go before their ridiculous names. People hate to get a letter "Dash So-and-so, Esq."

But I would here disclose a great and useful secret, second only to that which Prometheus stole from the gods, and this contribution of mine should merit me a civic crown. If you do not know the initial of the fellow you are writing to there is a sort of twiddle which looks like a "T," or an "F," or a "U," or might even be an imperfect "W," or a "J" overdone. I think, indeed, it is capable of interpretation as almost any letter in the alphabet; and if you will practise this twiddle you outflank their tiresome, baptismal names—for I suppose that even to-day most of them have been baptised.

Then there are the vast armies of honorific Orders, from the Garter downwards, with the famous newly-recruited myriads of O.B.E.'s, and there is J.P., and there is Rt. Hon., and there is M.P., and there is K.C., and (a thing to daunt the stoutest heart) there is a mass of letters giving pride to those who have no others, letters not conferred by any social authority, and yet the omission of which will make you an enemy for life. For instance, your correspondent may be F.R.G.S., or F.R.I.A. (I think it is), or F.R.C.S., or F.R.Z.S., or F.R.B.S., and even the whole lot of them combined, and not a day passes but a new one is sprung upon me.

Lastly, there are the transmarine titles; not those, indeed, of the Continent (for no one bothers about them here, nor could with so much of one's own to remember), but those that do come more or less into our lives from the general bond of one Crown.

There are the Honourables, who are Honourables because they have been professional politicians in the Colonies. And that has often made me think

of what might happen to the younger son of an earl who should emigrate, become a professional politician in some colony and then get into the Privy Council. Would he be "the Rt. Honourable The Honourable The Honourable," or what? And if, on the top of that, he became an Archdeacon, would you have to write on his envelope, "The Rt. Honourable The Honourable The Honourable The Venerable," or what? There are Rajahs and Maharajahs, and Akons and Khans, and there is the Oyo of Oya and a hundred others. Now, though we are not bound in strict duty to know them all, though nothing dreadful would happen to us (as it happens to those who wickedly neglect their duty to the rich, who mix up marquises with viscounts, or forget all about the Companionship of St. Patrick and the Bath), yet are we under some obligation to acquire a general elementary knowledge of these transmarine glories. But I say again that when it comes to the Continent of Europe, we put down our foot and will not be bothered. "His Holiness" attached to the Pope, "His Majesty" attached to a king, is as far as we care to go.

I often wonder what will happen to this huge house of cards. Will it collapse suddenly as Diocletian's did, or will it live on, a sort of ghastly life? Will its boundaries break down and will its stuff remain? Will some few of the dignitaries take on a vigorous life of centuries while others are forgotten, as "Dux," the Roman word for a General, has lived on and on and on for more than 2,000 years, always with dignity attached to it, while "Illustrious" and "Most Dignified" and "Your Benignity" died and were forgotten?

On Titles

Will our posterity, say 200 years hence, while calling pretty well everybody "Colonel" (as we now call pretty well everybody "Esq.") let "Lord" become a separate rank without distinctions? Will knights surreptitiously claim hereditary rights and establish them? What will happen? We do not know.

Meanwhile, for the benefit of that posterity, those who some centuries hence will read these immortal lines (in the surviving specimens of English prose for the schools of that date), I do put on record and solemnly confirm this: that to-day there are exactly two distinctions which all Englishmen whatsoever really would like to have, and only two. Though nearly all men would like *an* honour, yet there are two honours which *all* men desire. One is the double letter K.G., and the other is the double letter V.C. But they may go on wanting, for very few of them will get it. What we desire in this life and what we obtain are very different things.

On Bad Verse

To return to the subject of bad verse. . . . .

IT is remarkable and true that bad verse, the nadir, has about it something of the poignant and removed from common experience which you get also in poetry. In the same way the demons are aweful—though in a different fashion from what the angels are. And so also great pits strike one with horror, as do the mountains with their sublimity.

That this is true of bad verse we not only feel on reading it, but also discover by the test that those men are rare indeed who can produce very, *very* bad verse; some of the worst—perhaps the worst of all—has been produced not only not unconsciously but quite deliberately by the great artificers of the craft. Good poets have sat down to see how badly they could write, and have produced stuff with a savour entirely its own and far below the level of your ordinary hymn or healthy public school song.

Very bad verse is the inverted copy or mirror of high poetry save in this, that it does not survive. The little tiny fragments of the bad verse of antiquity which have come down to us have only come down to us through the deliberate ridicule of great

critics or great poets, which has preserved them. But in later times—the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, for instance—bad verse has been preserved in another fashion which, as it has not been properly recognized, I propose to set forth here.

The great poets and the great writers of prose have now and again picked out, from what was clearly their own early or insufficient effort, examples to illustrate what bad verse might be. The immortal Martinus Scriblerus is an example. Pope and Swift certainly wrote many of those lines which, in that masterpiece, they quote as the worst conceivable. They either wrote them when they were young and brought them up for condemnation in their age, or else—less likely—they wrote them for the occasion as badly as they could. I am for my part convinced that the sonnet in the *Misanthrope* which Molière puts into the mouth of the fop was not only written by Molière himself, but was written by some young Molière who thought it good when he wrote it.

There is this to be noticed about the bad verse of the good poets (as, for instance, about that sonnet of Molière's)—they cannot (the Great Poets) quite avoid a good arrangement of words. And in this sonnet of Molière's I have discovered more than one line which pleases me: he makes his hero laugh at it, it is true, but it is not such a very bad sonnet after all, or, rather, it has some not at all bad lines in it.

Which leads me to another suggestion, a very unpopular one, but I appeal—like the granddaughter of Bechamel the sauce-maker—to impartial posterity.

On Bad Verse

I say (in fear and trembling) that a particular set of writers which was particularly revered in England—and especially revered during the Victorian period of England—was not essentially made up of great poets, although these writers published in all their lives perhaps three or four hundred good lines mixed up with twenty times as many thousand bad or indifferent ones.

It is an eternal discussion as to what makes a poet great; whether volume counts, and if so in what degree; whether proportion is necessary, and sanity—and so on, and so forth. But I think we have here a certain test: If a man cannot write, say, fourteen consecutive lines all of which are good poetry, then he is not a good poet. A good poet should, of necessity, have a certain wind. He may not be able to run a mile or even a quarter mile, but if he cannot run a hundred yards he is not an athlete.

Now the Victorian writers of whom I speak (and God forbid that I should mention the name of one of them!) had this particular characteristic about them, that though they often wrote three or four or even five lines that were good poetry, they could not keep it up at all. No one of them could write, for instance, a sonnet which had not in it some one absurd, even despicable, line. Now, in a short composition, your good poet is absolute. He is perfect. That is his test. If, in a short composition—for instance, a lyric of six quatrains—he has something quite absurd, then has he never taken the baths of Apollo. He may have got his feet wet, or even fallen in and scrambled out again quickly, but he has not taken the baths of Apollo; which you will remember are cold:

in August a recommendation. . . . Was it not into the Mamertine that they lowered the unfortunate barbarian with ropes, and was it not then that he said: "*How cold are thy baths, Apollo!*"? He was quoting, I know. But as I do not know what he was quoting from, I will leave it at that and return to my original theme.

I say that those men who are too much admired, whereas they were not really good poets at all, betray themselves in this fashion. A man may be a great poet in youth and age with a period of bad poetry in between, or he may be a good poet and then lose his poetry. That is common enough. But for a man to be a bad poet and a good poet at the same time in the same verse is, I maintain, impossible.

What was it caused an excessive admiration of these men, particularly in the Victorian period?

The error extended to prose writers as well, and not only to prose writers, but to history. There was a whole mass of false judgment in letters and history between 1830 and 1890, which it is our business now to get rid of.

What was the common factor? I take it the common factor was confusion. Men confused the emotion of patriotism or of religion, or any very strong emotion, with the unmistakable quality which marks good written stuff in prose and verse. They similarly confused what was pleasant with what was true in history.

Cromwell made his country great and respected abroad. He was an admirable cavalry leader. He had a decisive way of putting things. Therefore might history legitimately say that he was of such and such a position and was built upon

such and such a scale. But that was not enough for the Victorians. They had to make a hero of this very unheroic person, and therefore deliberately omitted much from his history that they chose not to repeat or, as their own phrase went, much that they had to "try to forget."

Now that is telling lies; for no man really deceives himself, though we say he does in extenuation of our own frailties. And so with letters. The Victorians emphasized in John Bunyan what their grandfathers would have called "enthusiasm," using the word in a bad sense: for their grandfathers disliked that tone of mind. The Victorians liked the orgiast—well, that was their affair. But liking that tone of mind they said, critically, things about John Bunyan's work which were simply not true. They remarked with justice the magnificence of certain of his passages of prose. The close of "The Pilgrim's Progress" is as good a bit of prose as you can get. But the book has any amount of passages which are grotesque: any amount which are bad rhythm as well as bad sense: any amount which are boring. Bunyan was not a writer of even, regular, and always-to-be-praised prose in the sense in which the great Swift or Newman were such writers. He was an enthusiast, and had all the hot and the cold fits, the difficulties and the inspirations of the enthusiast—the complexities, the dullnesses, as well as the sudden fires.

I say this of Bunyan, knowing well that I challenge much surviving opinion, but, I repeat, I will not mention the name of one writer of modern bad verse, for if I did I should be torn to pieces by wild women and a kind of men.

The memory of these insufficient poets is still strong, like that of onions on a larder shelf after you have taken them away, and in offending that memory I should offend the onion-worshippers. Therefore, if you please, I will name no names.

But I do say that you can apply to those over-praised writers of verse a certain test beyond the test I have just quoted of their inability to write more than a very short number of good lines. It is the test of this question: "*How would their reputation have fared if they had taken the other side in their theology? Their politics?*" It is a question which one could put with a good deal of point to living writers as well. How would So-and-So have fared if instead of preaching the common and corrupted ethic of his time with its come-and-kick-me look, and its sly avarice, the ethic of the dead arrangement still called by the name of law, the ethic of the soaked-in-case who want to be tickled, he had written exactly the same stuff on the other side—on the side of St. Alphonsus and of Bayard? How would So-and-So have fared if, instead of spicing all his stuff with an exaggerated and false patriotism —international at that—praising the strong and despising the momentarily weak, he had written in precisely the same fashion upon the unpopular side? If he had doomed the strong of the moment and extolled the suffering? That question is a fundamental one. When a man wishes to see whether he has drawn a line perpendicularly to another line and is in doubt, he does well to put his drawing before a looking-glass where any error there may be will be doubled and reversed and thus detected. The test I propose is of that

same kind. Imagine an *opposite* motive and see if the verse would still sound good. If not, it is not good.

But let us, in solace, remember this about bad verse ; that there are all round us, yes, and writing for the papers and very popular, too, many worthy men who, if they wrote verse at all, would write bad verse, and yet have the wisdom not to write verse, or at any rate not to publish what they have written—an admirable thing to say of any man. For my part, I admire such men for this very reticence of theirs more than I do for all else they have written in the modern fashion, whether to prove that there is no God, or that we should drink only water, or that we should wear woollen boots or sleep with our windows open—or whatever else their gospel may be.

And, remembering that, being capable of writing execrable verse they have not written it, or at any rate not printed it, I forgive them all the rest.

The United Poets

SOME years ago—long before the war—the startled Fauns first heard, then saw (as they peeped through the brushwood) a motor-lorry bumping and careering down the road. It had no hood ; it was open. It was the more remarkable because in those days motor-lorries were rare. And it carried nor stone nor sand nor any other merchandise, but all that were in those days the Poets of England—Swinburne being dead.

As motor-lorries, so Poets were in those days rare. The whole tale of these was eleven.

They had a Chief, or Master, or Mystagogue, who had gathered them together and was taking them on this perilous pilgrimage. I am not making this up. It is true.

So went they, so bumped they, with a prodigious clatter, and only one Prosator among them, the serf at the wheel ; but they, all Poets, were clinging on for dear life in the wooden truck behind . . . when—oh, my God !—a wheel struck something, and off the tumbril went into the ditch, and the Poets were flung far and wide. But Apollo stayed the hand of Death ; they were the worse for nothing more than bruises. For Phœbus Apollo in his house of light saw Death going down through

clouds upon England and he said, "Death, where go you?" and Death answered, "I go to make an end of Eleven Poets." But the Far-Darter answered him again saying, "Oh! Death, tarry a moment while I pour you out the dark wine of Africa which the Massillians have brought over the cloud-shadowed sea to the ports of home."

So Death tarried, and when he had drunk that wine he slept; but while he slept, the Eleven Poets were saved. The lorry was, I know not how, set on its wheels again, and continued, in a chastened fashion, a less violent career, towards The Goal.

That Goal was a house where I had the good fortune to meet them; for in those days I was always in luck's way. I met them for one brief hour. I was not allowed to eat with them. I was sent for after the meal, as children are allowed to come in for dessert. . . . Yet was I older than most of these.

I did not waste the occasion, but almost immediately after my introduction to the Eleven Poets I challenged the Mystagogue, an Irishman, the Chief of the Band, and asked him the great question which has intrigued my mind from childhood.

"How," said I, "is poetry written?"

He put into his eyes a far-away look, like that of a fish which is dead, and he said in a mournful tone (did the Mystagogue):

"I cannot tell you. . . . I cannot communicate it to you. . . . It is a Muse."

I was naturally annoyed, for it was no answer at all; and I said (perhaps a little too sharply):

"I am afraid I cannot accept that answer! The truth is, you are keeping something back

from me. You desire to prevent competition in your trade, and to keep its great emoluments for your limited guild. But I *will* find means to learn, in spite of you all!"

He shook his head, and still more his hair, and smiled in the shape of a capital V. He said it could not be done.

I went home and consulted one of my many thousand books, and then another, and discovered the rules of Poetry, and read descriptions of Poetry in encyclopædias and critics' books, and also much poetry direct in Anthologies, hoping to find out how it was done. But to this day I have never discovered the way.

There is a story of Taine taking some of Renan's work to the window, looking closely at it through a large reading-glass, and saying: "One cannot see how it is constructed!" So I with poetry. I can see how verse is done, but I cannot see how poetry is done. How is a startling of the soul produced by the collocation of few, simple words? What essence is it in their sound and their order which opens the blinding doors of vision?

Chevauche Karle tout li port durant.

There, in one revelation, are the Passes of the Pyrenees! There are the solemn, menacing heights, the ceaseless waterfalls. There, in that line, are the gods of the unconquered hills. Yet it means in English exactly, word for word, "Charles rides up all the pass," and "Charles rides up all the pass" is not poetry.

I remember a leathery idiot giving, as an example to show that Homer was over-rated, the Catalogue of The Ships, and saying: "At any rate, you

won't call that poetry!"—which showed he did not know what poetry was.

τῷ δ' ἅμα τεσσαράκοντα μέλαιναι νῆες ἕποντο
"And forty dark ships followed him."

If that is not poetry I will eat my hat.

I suppose what the man meant was that a catalogue could not be poetry. You might just as well say that the name of a man could not be poetry, or the listed names of many famous men.

The marvel is that this essence, Poetry, whatever it is, survives, like the human soul surviving death. It survives a complete breach in continuity. The way in which the language was pronounced may be lost; the shades of meaning may be lost; sometimes even the plain meaning of a word or two in a passage of true Poetry may be lost. And yet the poetic essence survives. It survives in full strength—again like the human soul—and if there were a resurrection for languages, as there is for human beings, then the poetic soul meeting the poetic body would be quite at its ease, not enfeebled by so long a separation.

Thus when I hear it argued (with every probability behind it) that French poetry, on account of its extreme subtlety, will not—some centuries hence—survive that most lasting of our languages, I traverse. For men sometimes say that English poetry and Spanish poetry will survive the end of our civilization, because they are dependent on lilt or stress. But how shall the glory of French verse remain which wholly reposes upon such tiny modulations of the tongue? The answer is that Greek undoubtedly reposed upon these

same necessities; yet I take it that Greek poetry has survived.

Moreover, if you look at it, the English effects are a great deal more than lilt or stress, though lilt or stress is never absent from them. Some of the most desperately successful efforts in the English lyric are as slight in their nuance as the French. It is rare, no doubt; but you can find cases. For instance:

"*Ah me, whilst thee the shores and sounding seas wash far away.*"

Here is in English what a French line is: a line with hardly any primary emphasis, a level line wholly dependent for its enormous effect upon the vowel sounds and the slightest modulations. And now for the miracle.

Imagine a time, a few generations hence, when the British *th* shall be blunted into *d* by Colonials of every blood and colour, when the short *o* of "wash" has turned to the popular "worsh" and when the long *o* in "shore" had come to be pronounced like our *oo*, when the *s* of the plural has in every position come to be pronounced like *z*, when the final *d* in "and" has become silent, and also the final *g* in "ing," and the characteristic *a* of the cultivated has become the popular "oi." "Whoilst dee de zhoores an zoundin zeas worsh far awoi." How could the line survive such changes? But it will survive; though I am damned if I understand how!

There is something very consoling for poor mortals in all this. We are here, in this world, all out of scale. We are hurried, we are grotesquely subject to change, though by our every appetite

we protest against change, and hunger and thirst for victory over change. We are fast-rooted things, mocked by ceaseless fading; we are immemorial lovers carried on by a river of progressive forgetfulness; we are deathless within, and yet a death goes on about us (ah! and *within* us) all the time.

And there is in the midst of such a trial no temporal symbol of our real, our ultimate, security except Poetry. The intellect may convince us (if it is strong enough) of our immortality. Faith will always accept the sensible doctrine of our not time-bound fate, and of the concurrent doctrine of Resurrection. But you do not find any stuff around you to confirm you—except Poetry. Religion assures: but nothing man-made supports the vision of heaven, save the completed line. That endures. That is outside time.

It is no answer to say that a poet may be lost, his writings forgotten. Of course they may—or they may be found again. The point is that the great poetic line is not subject to decay. So long as it is there at all, it is there in its fullness. And this is true of nothing else among the works of men.

On this account I envy those Eleven Poets from the lorry whom I met so long ago, and the Head Poet, or Mystagogue, their leader. I often wish I could meet them again.

These men were secure of something which no great soldier, no great painter, nor sculptor, nor architect—not even any great Secretary of State for Home Affairs or Master of the Buckhounds or Chief Whip—can boast. They had achieved the unique thing, the only deathless thing—that is, supposing they were Poets.

The United Poets

I suppose they must have been Poets, because they came labelled as Poets and were received as Poets; and, in fine, were by all external and social criteria, Poets. Just as a Lord is a Lord, or as a Judge is a Judge, so were they Poets. I really do not know what the definition is, but they were Poets. They were the possessors, the authors, the creators of that which no one could take from them and which will endure for ever —something that will never grow old. What a consolation for the memory of death! What a foretaste of immortality!

It is a fine thing to be able to say, and I can imagine one of these Eleven British Poets saying it:

"I have awkward manners and a foolish smile. I cannot earn more than a few hundreds a year, and my father left me nothing. I cut a poor figure among you all. But I have myself *made*: I am, therefore, a complete possessor. I am father and *master* of something entirely different from anything which you command: whether you command wealth, or lineage, or beauty, or any one of the talents which delight mankind in song or in instrument of music, or with the pencil, or even in building. I surpass you all, for I wrote this, that, or the other thing, and it will stand for ever."

Certainly of all boasts short of virtue it is the proudest boast a man can make.

On Convincing People

I HAVE just been working at the "Provincials" of Pascal. They are full of lies, and full of errors. They would not convince the stupidest of readers who should seriously compare them with the original documents which Pascal attacked. But no reader has ever done so. My object in reading Pascal's book was to expose it, and therefore my object on a small stage was to do what Pascal did on a large one, that is, to convince people: with this only difference. Pascal had only to convince those who agreed with him in believing something that was not true, to wit, that Casuistry was immoral. But I set out to convince, of something that *was* true (to wit, that Casuistry was both moral and necessary) those who heartily, save Maynard and Derome, disagreed with me.

This amiable exercise has set me thinking about the art of convincing people; and I say "of convincing" and not "of persuading," for I think that the two arts stand for two different processes. You can persuade a man to do a thing though he still disapproves of it in conscience and intellect. But conviction is something higher.

It is an appeal to the intelligence and the love of truth. It relies upon the production of proof.

On Convincing People

Very interested am I in ferreting out the process whereby the thing is done, and in discovering why it will succeed when it is done in one way, and fail when it is done in another.

I must make clearer my distinction between the mere production of a mood, persuading, and *conviction.*

The mere production of a mood is effected (according to the weakness of your subject) by some form of suggestion. The modern popular press works that way. Its weapon is mere iteration, and its victim is the many-headed beast. For the persuasion of the higher sort the thing must be done by some seductive art, rhetoric, or flattery, or even music. But in either case the end of the process is not a certitude of the intelligence, and therefore your result is not final. Your intended victim may be jerked out of his mood by any shock—especially by a shock of reality.

There is between the mere persuasion and conviction an intermediate thing, very common. It is advocacy: the advancing of selected arguments towards a certain selected end. The victim knows he is being played upon, yet he often succumbs. A man does not want to visit a particular place. The method of suggestion would be merely to repeat the name of the place over and over again, and the command to go there. Such are those advertisements which you see upon the walls of great cities in flaming letters commanding you to enter a dull playhouse. Advocacy would put before the man all the real advantages of the place it wanted him to visit and hide all the real disadvantages. It would act through the intelligence, but also by cheating the intelligence.

Now, conviction is in a different world. When you convince a person you make him really certain. It does not follow that you make him certain of a truth, but you make him certain through the intelligence and not through a mere mood. Nor do you put him, as advocacy does, between two issues, one of which he chooses. You make him wholly at one with the doctrine you give. You implant certitude to the exclusion of every alternative. When you have done that you have created something much more solid and permanent than a mood or even an action; you have achieved a much greater thing than any advocacy or suggestion can. You have established a mind.

I know that in saying this I am going flat against the opinion of my time, for in these days we revere much more the man who can get a mob to think the moon is made of green cheese and then, tomorrow, that it is made of Sapolio, than we do the man who can convince. And the reason we revere the baser method is that for the moment there is more money in it. For the amount of money that a man may get out of his fellows by a trick is our measure of his excellence. Nevertheless, I will maintain that to convince is, even in practical affairs, much the bigger business. For though you convince but a few in a certain time, yet what you do is to plant something durable, and something filled with the power of propagating itself. Conviction breeds.

When it comes to the methods of conviction, however, I hesitate. The great rules are fairly well known: to present an argument fed with concrete example, and in doing so to interest—not to fatigue. If you combine those two things,

interest and illustration, you should, according to the rules, succeed. The point about not fatiguing is that however perfect your reasoning, however strong your illustration, both are useless if the mind to which they are addressed cannot receive them. Fatigue interrupts reception. The points about concrete example are, first, that a concrete example alone is vivid (even in mathematics you must have visible symbols); the next, that in the application of any idea, concrete example is the only test of value to man. You will never convince a man, for instance, that protection necessarily impoverishes a nation if he has before his eyes the example of nations becoming suddenly very rich after adopting high tariffs.

It is quite clear that the citation of admirable examples, and even their citation without boredom, is not sufficient. There is something else, some trick of presentation, which lies, I fancy, in the sense of proportion, and which achieves success. In this, by the way, Pascal had genius. A wag rewrote one or two of the "Provincials," substituting Janseuists for Jesuits, and thereby showed that they made just as good reading and were just as convincing in attacking friends as enemies.

Pascal had the art—which is most important in this matter—of leaving his readers under the impression that they had heard the whole case. It can be done honestly by actually stating the opposite case before giving the counter arguments. But it is more often done dishonestly (as Pascal did it) by making your reader think that he has heard all there is to hear, although he has, as a fact, heard hardly anything, or nothing, of the other side. Pascal was, of course, working on

very favourable ground. He attacked what was at once powerful and unpopular, and what was not only powerful and unpopular, but sincere and therefore incapable of using poisoned weapons against himself. There is nothing more interesting in literature than to see how the honest men he attacked blundered in trying to refute him. They blundered because they were *too* honest for controversy. They saw that he was lying, and they took it for granted he was telling simple lies of a childish sort. They accused him of mechanical inaccuracy and misquotation, which was not the way to set to work at all.

Pascal's method was in part what may be called the suppressed alternative. It is a method which you often see used by demagogues also, and by any one of those who ridicule a superior to an inferior. Thus, on one occasion Pascal finds an author saying: "The obligation of a Christian to give alms out of his superfluity rarely arises." The man who wrote this used the technical theological word "obligation," but Pascal quotes him as though he used it in the loosest conversational sense. The man who wrote it decided (with obvious common-sense) that those cases were rare in which you could say that a Christian had done grievous wrong by *not* giving alms on a particular occasion. Pascal presented the matter so that his reader thought that the writer he was attacking discountenanced giving alms at all.

You very often see the same sort of thing done by people who ridicule the definitions of law. There is nothing easier. The law says, for instance, that a minor, a young giant of twenty years, can avoid payment by pleading "infancy."

On Convincing People

It is quite easy to make that appear nonsense. It is not nonsense, but it is made to appear nonsense by using the word "infancy" in two senses. In the same way one could say by strict definition that the law does not forbid you to murder your grandmother. What the law does is to hang you if you murder your grandmother, which is, in strict definition, quite another proposition. Great play one could make before some one who had never heard of courts of justice, by saying: "Just think! The law in this country actually allows one to murder one's grandmother!" leaving discreetly aside the legal consequences of the act, and using the word "allow" positively and negatively in the same breath. The "Provincial letters" are crammed with this trick of presenting a word in two senses: as who should play on the word "take" and denounce the injunction "take your neighbour's money quietly" as meaning "steal it on the sly," when all the author meant was "don't play the fussy and generous refuser over small payments due to you."

There are those who tell you that not only Pascal and a hundred others, but *every one* who has *ever* convinced has used dishonest methods, and that no one ever convinced by solid proof alone. There are those who will tell you that the admission of opposing arguments and their honest analysis would be either so dull or so damaging, or both, that those who adopt this, the only sincere method, will necessarily fail.

I do not agree. Thus only is it achieved once and for all. People who are too weak to follow out a close chain of reasoning are at first not affected by strict deduction and probity of evidence.

But there is always a minority with brains enough and energy enough to follow an argument, and then at last lead the rest. The quality of such achievement is that it is final : it is never reversed. It is done once and for all. The few who have mastered the proof are fixed and have, henceforward, authority. To produce such final conviction is a very great action indeed. It is the making of the public mind. It is the ultimate direction of the State.

But its first victory is exceedingly restricted. In matters where men have interest against truth, conviction is so rare as to work at first almost imperceptibly. An insignificant body receive a truth. Often they are dispersed. In a century there is a multitude. Soon, the world.

On Controversy

IT is astonishing what a great part of energy goes in our civilized and lettered society to controversy.

This country is certainly as civilized as any in Europe and it is much more lettered than any other. That is, there are more people bothering about print than you will find anywhere else. It has something to do, I think, with living in great towns and depending upon newspapers, but, anyhow, there it is, and one of its effects is a continued occupation in controversy. It always astonishes the foreign visitor, and I think it usually irritates the foreign resident. It is a habit often attacked, but all this opposition to it is a foreign opposition at bottom. To the native controversy is food and drink, and no one would be without it.

Now there is much more in this habit of controversy than meets the eye. If you were to call it a passion for wrangling you would be exactly contradicting its nature. It is dearest to those who hate wrangling. It is carefully preserved from reality. It is a sort of game, and has in it much the same instinct as makes men play other games in a game-loving country. Its object

is not conviction, but scoring under set conditions, and it is most interesting to watch how the rules grow up of themselves and how strict they become.

It would be the death of controversy to demand a real conquest. When people begin to get into that mood controversy ends and fighting begins. Nations which are intent on real results fall into civil wars. Nothing is more opposed to the spirit of controversy than this spirit of arms and a creed. Controversy is to the search after ultimate truth, or the desire for conviction, what fencing with foils is to slashing with cavalry swords, or what shooting for a challenge shield is to sniping from a tree at the other person in the mud.

Its weapon is advocacy. In pure, serene, absolute controversy the advocate will cheerfully take either side, but even in that less perfect controversy to which (alas!) our fallen nature condemns us, and in which there is some suspicion of real feeling, advocacy easily takes precedence over the statement of truth. And that is one of the delights of controversy, as no one knows better than they who have wasted and enjoyed their lives in this delicious pastime.

I always think that there is an ill done to controversy when the lists are unequally chosen. It demands for its proper exercise fairly equal chances for either side. For instance, one man gets up and says that England would be much better off if no foreign goods came into it, whereupon the other man, scenting a controversy from afar, says: "What about tea?" There at once—at the very issue of the bout—you have a knockout, and that spoils sport. Or again, a man says: "If you want to improve the communications

of London you must have wider streets, and you cannot have wider streets without interfering with privileged pieces of property." The moment you begin to talk like that controversy is abominably offended. You might as well play chess with a loaded revolver, or come to the football field with a posse of bravoes.

No, the essence of this admirable exercise is a sort of "picking up sides" which balances the argument. You must give reasonable chances for advocacy to either party. Chalk the lists, face the champions square, and then let go.

I notice a very proper contempt for, and sometimes interference with, that party to a controversy who breaks even the less understood and more subtle rules: for instance, dropping the "Mr." in Politics. You may say of a parliamentarian, "Mr. Biggs was committing political murder when he poured his hidden poison into the sleeping ear of Mr. Higgs." That is all right. It means that old Biggs thought he could get more money by abandoning his leader Higgs. The use of the two "Misters" proves that in your heart you care not a dump which gets the salary, contracts, and perks. But if you say "Biggs won't take office under Higgs because he thinks there's no money in it," that is blackguardly: for it spoils sport.

It is thus a breach of the rules to impute what are called "unworthy motives"; that is, serious motives. Both parties must, like the champions of the ring, shake hands; and there are a lot of little phrases (they are kept set up in most newspaper offices, and in some are stereotyped in ready-made bars) which come in most usefully

for this purpose. Such are "No-one-can-dispute (Mr. Noggins's) scholarship-or-his-quite peculiar-knowledge-of (Samian ware)," after which you go on to argue that in point of fact Noggins is as ignorant as the beasts that perish, and you support your contention with special pleading.

So deep-rooted is this love of controversy that one of its favourite playing-fields is what one would imagine to be sacred ground, to wit, the security and happiness of one's own country. Jones has only to say that he wants his country to win in some war of life and death, for Brown, tempted by so admirable an occasion, to come up on the other side. But what does Brown do? Do you suppose he says, "I want my country to perish"? Not a bit of it; that would not be controversy at all, and, what is more, it would be an impossible position for Brown to take up, considering that Brown, by the very fact that he is conducting such a controversy, is stamping his chief national characteristic all over himself. So what Brown does is to show how defeat would ultimately enhance the glory and increase the strength of the country. Both parties agree to this special limited area of operations, and within it they spar round and round and round. Meanwhile, the real war goes on, no harm is done at home, and the nation wins or loses without a link between that awful reality of war and the spillikin-match at home.

It is very difficult to define where victory in this game of controversy lies. It depends to some extent, like victory in any other game, upon fatigue, or lack of attention. I had a controversy in the "Times Literary Supplement" many years ago about

the Battle of Evesham with another person who apparently knew less about it than I did. After the special pleading and nonsense had gone on through five or six moves I quoted Matthew Paris. My opponent (who wore a mask and a long cloak) came in with a heavy blow, showing that Matthew Paris was dead when the Battle of Evesham was fought. Now, the counterblow to this was as easy as falling off a log. Your spectator (for whose benefit these newspaper duels are fought) would naturally say, "This is final!" What he did not know was that there is a continuation of Matthew Paris, commonly called under the same name, which *does* deal with the Battle of Evesham. All I had to do was to write another letter (which I am sure the courteous Editor would have printed, seeing that he got all this for nothing), pointing out with the utmost good feeling, tact, etc., that my opponent was swindling, and, by using a false technical term, deceiving the populace. "Matthew Paris" (I should have said) "is a conventional term for the original chronicle *and its continuation* as a whole, and it is '*a poor trick of controversy*'" (I love that phrase; it is one of the seasoned and rooted phrases) "to confuse the general reader with false references." Did I make such a reply? Did I write that letter to the "Times Literary Supplement"? Not I! I was smitten with an intense desire to go to Belgium (it was before the war) and study the battlefield of Ramillies, where is sold the worst liquor in the world; and off I went, leaving my opponent the proud and sole victor on that field. I wish to-day I knew who he was. To slay or to be slain by a hooded antagonist is poor fun: it

ought to be part of the rules of the theatre for the man to pull off the hood at the end, either from his own glazing eyes or from those of his prostrate victim, whereupon the ladies would recognize to their amazement the features of Sir Guy de Beaurivage or Mr. Hulp, or whoever it might be, and the tourney would end with a feast to the hero after the sentimental burial of the dead.

Which reminds me of what a shame it is that so much controversy *should* be anonymous. It was never meant to be so. After all, controversy is conducted for the amusement of the onlookers as well as for, and more than for, the exercise and moral health of the principals, and there is not much fun in an anonymous combat where, for all you know, the opposing parties may really be one and the same person.

Many a case have I known in London journalism where, as a matter of fact, the opposing parties *were* one and the same person. There was a man who wrote years ago, during the Boer War, to a pro-Boer daily paper which he disliked, complaining of the way in which the teeth of animalculæ gnawed into the copper sheathing-plates of ships in the South Seas, and ruined them. Then he wrote a letter from another place in another false name to the same paper, saying that the first letter was written by an ignoramus, and describing how the animalculæ should be dealt with. There was a tremendous fight lasting for weeks, and it ended, I remember, by a beautiful description of the great ships built at Solothurn in Switzerland and there launched upon the mighty deep. Even then the editor did not smell a rat. Why should he? Editors cannot always know

everything. And he thought (did this editor) that Switzerland lay upon the sea. It was necessary, therefore, for the public to break the ring and burst up the show: which they did, amidst great laughter.

I know another case where a man, being the literary editor of a great daily paper, reviewed one of his own books with the utmost virulence —but anonymously. He showed in this review a very profound knowledge of the tricks lying behind the production of the book and of the charlatanism of it. Then did he, in his own name, write a dignified reply, and there was quite a little commotion.

The reviewer wrote back adding further charges, which were demonstrably true. The author wrote once more saying his dignity forbade his continuing the quarrel, and the next day both of them counted as one in a meaningless division of the House of Commons.

To this day I am never quite certain that the more violent leaders I read in opposing papers are not often written by the same man; at any rate, they are often written in exactly the same style, with the notable exception of one daily paper which, as the atheist said of his unbaptised child, "shall be nameless." All the others (except this notable *one*) have their leaders written in precisely the same manner. That is what makes me think that they are done for the most part by one man—and what an output he must have! And what a lot of money he must earn!—even at two guineas a thousand, the price of prose in these most happy years of peace which have seen the birth of a new Europe and the dawn of The Day of Justice final and secure.

On Inaccuracy

THE other day I was writing in other fields than these, ploughing another land (to which, for the honour I bear it, I again give no name), and I had occasion to speak about the Nereids who swim about in the sea. I very pompously announced their appearance in the Sixteenth Book of the Iliad. I should have said the Eighteenth Book.

Why did I say the Sixteenth Book? I cannot tell. I have awaited, since the appearance of that article, letters written to me privately, written to the paper itself, written to other papers, all saying: "Why do you talk about things you know nothing of? You call it the Sixteenth Book; it is the Eighteenth Book."

So far no letters have come either to me or to the paper in question. Nor has anyone even written to any of the great daily papers on the subject. So perhaps it will blow over. But my mind returns to the matter. Why did I write "Sixteenth" when I meant "Eighteenth"? What is inaccuracy? What are its sources? Whence does it spring? What makes one man more inaccurate than another, or rather (and much more truly) why is one man inaccurate in

some things and another in others? What the devil is it all due to, anyhow?

I know very well why accuracy is such an anxious matter with men. It is because, alone of all the factors of learning, it is easily and mechanically attainable. It is no good a man trying to be just in judgment about a great and broad matter on which he is ignorant. It would be no good, for instance, my trying to look learned through a just judgment of Russian poetry—for I cannot read Russian. No man can mechanically, and as a matter of course, set himself right in the major factors of learning. But both he and others can get references right, now that there are so many printed books of reference. And therefore men study accuracy in published book-details, because they say to themselves: "Fool I may be, and ignorant I may be; but anyhow, I can be accurate—with the help of a public library." And at the same time they say to themselves: "General ignorance it is easy to hide; but if I am inaccurate, the biggest fool born can find me out: with the help of a public library."

So far so good. I know well enough why one bothers so absurdly about accuracy in such details; or, to put it otherwise, why mere slips of the pen and misspellings frighten us so much. But what I do not understand is how and why they take place in subjects which one knows as well as one's own name.

I remember once writing a long book about Paris; a long, long book, to pay my first quarter's rent as a young man. And in that book I found myself perpetually saying "North" when I meant "South" in the matter of the immortal hill—in the matter of

the hill of the University. I always talked of going up that hill as going "North," whereas if you go up that hill you walk due South.

And I knew a man once who whenever he went into a shop to buy razor blades for his patent razor always said "railway blades." Yet in other respects he was an ordinary man.

I will not attempt to solve the problem. It is not fatigue that does it, still less is it real ignorance; for you will notice that a man is inaccurate about things he knows thoroughly well, and that the mistakes he makes are always of an absurd kind which he would be the first to spot in others; for instance, calling Nottingham Northampton, and the other way about. All one can say is that it happens as variations happen in the generation of animals, or as any other fluke happens. Some God guides it.

Inaccuracy is a very fruitful and powerful creator of things. It not only creates legends, it creates words. There are hosts and crowds of words which have come in through the talent of men for inaccuracy and through the inspiration of inaccuracy, which is blown into men by this God of whom I speak. Hence what is called *metathesis*, the very fruitful parent of many admirable words from Turmut to Hercules. Hence also the naturalization of French and other foreign words. It is a pity, I think, that so much printing, and the foolish pride of those who can read, checks the process nowadays. I live in hopes that it will not check the process for long, and that our coming barbarism will return to these popular words.

"Chauffeur" should be "shover," and "asparagus"—which I like to hear called "grass"—

has, I hope, taken root for ever as "sparrow-grass" —a very good name for it; for it is a grass and sparrows have no particular bond with it. They well might have, if they only knew how good it was; but they are stupid little beasts, and good for nothing. And if you tell me that thus to branch off upon the matter of sparrows is disturbing to the reader, and that one ought to keep the main thread of one's discourse, I answer you with a book always well praised and in parts quite on the highest level, called "The Book of Job." If you will read "The Book of Job" you will find that, in the catalogue of strange beasts which the writer brings forward in defence of the majesty of God, he gets to the ostrich. But hardly has he mentioned the ostrich when the inane habits of that enormous fowl prove too much for him. He forgets all about God and creation and the rest of it, and allows himself a little separate diatribe against the idiocy of the ostrich before getting back to his theology. So I with sparrows.

And now that I have taught you this lesson from Job, I will return to the matter of inaccuracy.

Inaccuracy is also the breeder not only of good native phrases, but of excellent tales, like the well-rubbed, polished, ancient, and now immutable story of the boy in buttons who got nervous at the grandeur of the bishop, and said, when the sleepy bishop asked who was knocking: "It's the Lord, my boy."

And inaccuracy is the parent also of that still older and still more immutable story about the Pyramids of Egypt and their builders, which I cannot print here.

It was inaccuracy which made the guide-book

man so angry at the phrase, "Our Lord God, the Pope," his translation of "Divus Papa," put before the title of some canonized pope of the past.

And it was inaccuracy that made the mediæval story-teller talk of the "Emperor Pliny" and of Virgil's brazen tower. And what a picture I get of the Emperor Pliny sending for the Magician Virgil who builds the brazen tower! Inaccuracy is a mighty mother of works.

It pleases me also especially in this, that you cannot teach it; you cannot make a man inaccurate. There is no way of becoming inaccurate by industry, and if you deliberately try to be inaccurate you fail. Inaccuracy is perhaps the most spontaneous and the freest of the gifts offered by the Spirit to the wit of man. It is even more spontaneous and more free than the gift of writing good verse, or that rarer gift which I have also written of here—the gift of writing abominably bad verse; exceptionally bad verse; criminally bad verse; execrable verse.

And inaccuracy is a great leveller—like Love and Death and other less commonly quoted levellers—like Wine and War and Repentance.

For there is no one, whoever he may be, however learned or however ignorant, who may not suddenly be found inaccurate. And, what is more, the same man will be inaccurate in one period and accurate in another, entirely as the Spirit chooses and not as *he* chooses.

Lastly, inaccuracy has this great and noble quality attached to it, that it breeds real tragedy; and that is a finer thing than breeding mere stories or even noble words. Try shouting "port" down the decks when you mean "starboard," in some

narrow crowded fairway against a racing tide, and you will find out what I mean. Or again, inaccuracy in the setting of a range ; repeating (as I heard a man do at Chalons) 113 millimetres for 13 millimetres—and they plugged a village church miles and miles outside the camp.

In these matters, that which was but a trifle or a comic accident takes on majesty. Inaccuracy becomes a solemn thing.

And of all the forms by which inaccuracy builds up tragedy the best I know is that form whereby the God causes two letters to be put each into the envelope meant for the other. Out of one such error as that you might get another Trojan War !

On Technical Words

BE you technical and all the other learning shall be added unto you.

This commandment is not one revealed to man ; yet need it not be painfully learnt. It is so true that it is part of man's nature. The mind accepts it at once, instinctively. All men who would display learning, however really learned they may be, cannot but fall at once into the happy use of technicalities.

Now there is a good and solid reason for this. For a technical word takes the place of long explanation. If you do not use technical words you have to replace them by clumsy, roundabout phrases. You lose your direct effect. Technical words arise of themselves in any science or art, and there is no force, even of a god, that could keep them out. But that is only their genesis. Their true use is to bamboozle, and, my word ! how well they do it !

The French people, who (as Cæsar pointed out) are very keen upon the military affair, first applied to the actions of armies the very simple words of every day. If men were walking all in a line and were then spread out the French said that the formation was " unfolded." The progress of soldiers upon their feet from one place to another was

called "walking." When their formation was broken in defeat they were said to be "thrust off the road," that is, bereft of their principal method of progression and continuity; for it is by roads that armies are maintained. A force which lost its power was said to be "undone." The various positions of the sword were called "the first," "the second," "the third," "the fourth," "the fifth," "the sixth." You could not have it simpler! But the Technical Spirit was waiting for its prey, and very rapidly those simple words became in another language "deploy," "march," "rout," "tierce," "quarte," and the rest of it.

Quite lately, this necessary disease spread with peculiar exuberance into the untouched fields of painting and of music. Even those of my age can remember the advent of most of them. Time was when the critic of art said that a picture was very like the thing it was meant to represent, or that it was very unlike it. I can remember the older generation which talked like this. But to-day they might as well be teaching infants in words of one syllable. You have a whole army of words from "technique," which is very old, down to "square touch," which has not yet got a white beard but a long one, and you have "planes," and you have "values," and you have hundreds of others which, as it is not my trade, I shall not pretend to catalogue. But this I know, that no one can write art criticism at 1*s.* 6*d.* the inch until he has mastered the terms, and I know still better that having mastered the terms anyone whatsoever, though he be colour-blind, cross-eyed, and quite indifferent to proportion, can write the very best art criticism in the world. For criticism is good in proportion to

the awe which it excites. For the function of the critic (says Aristotle) is to criticize, that is, to pull the leg of the middle classes.

As for music, the victory of the thing is now insolent. It has triumphantly beaten out of the field all ordinary men. There is still a sturdy phalanx of purchasers who buy a picture because they like it, or who will tell you boldly that a picture is like or unlike the thing which it pretends to record. There is still a gallant remaining little force of merchants, most of them elderly, who think that a sky should be blue, and grass green, and bricks red, and all the rest of it, and who will *not* buy a picture to hang on the walls of the Detached House in its Own Grounds unless it is beautiful and true. But in the matter of music the miserable reactionaries, the old simpletons, have had the life beaten out of them. There is now no one left alive who dares say that he dislikes a complicated modern volume of noise. Music has become a thing altogether apart, like Sanscrit. On the one hand you have the huge mass of mankind still delighted with good tunes (I use the word "good" in fear and trembling. I mean, for instance, "Oh! Mr. Porter," the "Marseillaise," the "Dies Iræ," and "Auprès de ma Blonde"), and on the other you have the Sacred Initiate, who commune only with one another; save when they stand at the door of the Temple and with great contempt drop some few phrases of an unintelligible language to the gaping crowd without.

But I think that neither the adepts of art-critic-technicalities, nor even those of music-technicalities, will fully learn their trade till they study the kings and masters of the whole profession, which kings

and masters are the writers upon women's fashions. Anyone, as I have said, can become an art critic, and a good one, by learning a hundred words or so by heart and knowing where to stick them in; and though not anyone, yet a fair proportion of boys and girls can become music-critics by getting parrot-like in the enormous terms of their apparatus. But it is of public knowledge that the being who can write about women's dresses is one in a thousand.

Now why should this be? I do not know, but it is so. I am assured by those who have gone into the matter that most of these writers are men and not women, but there are, of course, women adepts too. Their occult vocabulary is twenty times more rich than the vocabularies of their concert-going and picture-gazing brothers, and it is not only rich, it is also accurate and determined. The terms used in booming a picture or a great complexity of noise have something floating about them. They can be applied contradictorily, one critic saying that a line is "amusing," and another saying that it "lacks touch." There is room apparently for licence, and, therefore (I hesitate to hint it), room for the charlatan. I do not mean of course that any art or music critic *is* a charlatan. No! Not for one moment! I only mean that he might be one; that it is possible to conceive of a charlatan using these solemn terms. But no charlatan could use technical terms about the fashions—women's fashions, at least—without being discovered at once. The Fashion-writers' Guild is a strict confraternity and an honourable one, demanding a severe and long apprenticeship and always certain of its instrument. If I read (of course I should

never read anything of the sort—I am only giving it as an illustration) "the foundation is of chinchilla draped *en échelon* and caught up with pom-poms of crapeaumort," I am reading about some one quite definite kind of ornament which everybody who has learnt the language will at once realize. I could not apply it vaguely to a black silk skirt or a velvet Medici collar, and therein I think the technicians of fashion are wholly superior to all their parallels.

Respectful as I am, however, to every group of technical terms, there is one set of which I can never be certain. I mean the metaphysical set. I may be wrong. It is not my trade at all. But do what I can it is impossible for me to take quite seriously the technical words of the people who to-day call themselves philosophers. I read St. Thomas and I understand, I read Descartes and I understand, I read Spinoza and I understand, I read Locke and I understand, but when I read the Moderns, the tail of the Germans, I cannot take them seriously at all. And the reason I cannot take them seriously is this. When I ask anybody else what a particular technical term means, he can always give me some kind of explanation. For instance, if a man says to me, "Political progress is an asymptote to ideal democracy," and I say to him, "Pray, Master, what do you mean by 'asymptote'?" the mathematician is quite able to take me kindly aside and explain to me, or to any other rational being, the nature of the hyperbola, and to show me how it is always getting closer to, but never touches, the lines called asymptotes, and then I understand exactly what he meant by his technical word. He meant that

political progress is always getting nearer to an ideal democracy but can never quite reach it. Thereupon I am content, for I can size my man up. But the modern philosophers will never consent to this. They will never put what they have to say in plain language, and I am by this time half persuaded that the reason they do not do so is that they cannot. I very much doubt whether the words they use mean anything at all. Therefore, it is that when I would read philosophy (which is no bad pastime for a man fatigued with real work and with the considerations of real problems), I fall back upon the *Summa* because, though it does indeed contain technical terms, they all have a plain meaning, and can every one of them be understood with a little simple explanation.

So much for technical terms: the short cuts to authority and status.

On the Accursed Climate

WHEN you curse the weather (as I do now) summon to your aid a great group of vapid Aurelian thoughts. It will do you no harm. Such thoughts are a pleasant repose for the mind, a sort of croon.

If you doubt that word "Aurelian," either read the notes Marcus Aurelius left, or, what is better, go to the British Museum and see the statue of that booby upon his horse. The horse is more intelligent than he.

What, then, are these which I call "Aurelian thoughts"? They are not unlike, in motive (though far inferior in quality), to the contrasted categories of Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*, admirably parodied by Mr. Barry Pain in *Robinson Crusoe's Return*, a book than which . . .

These categories you will remember consist in two columns: the first, grouse; the second, ingenious gratitude. In the first column: "I find myself upon a beach, shipwrecked, without any money, very damp and with nothing to eat." In the opposite column: "On the other hand I might have been born a chimpanzee in a place where chimpanzees are hunted."

It is one way of getting consolation, and a very

epicurean way, in the strictest sense of the term epicurean.

Do the same about the weather. "It rains. I have not seen the sun for three months. But, on the other hand, I might be freezing to death in the Arctic, or sitting up with a candle killing scorpions on some damned barren island of the Levantine Seas."

The crab about this method is that it does not really satisfy the mind. I have only to use these words "Levantine Seas," when at once the man deprived of sun thinks of sunlight and the man deprived of warmth thinks of warmth, and the scorpion seems a delightful beast, and if the island is barren, so much the better; it means that there is not too much rain, which is a curse.

I have noticed that men living in climates not human, never even try to console themselves, as do people living in England, which has the best climate in the world. They do not say: "Would that I were in a place of clouds and water!" They sit down sullenly (though with bright eyes), endure it, and die. It is only people just on the edge of perfection who complain. It is so with social things. The loudest cry rises not from the seller of papers in the streets, but from the man who finds that there is something wrong with his big motor-car, or that he cannot reserve a carriage to the Riviera, but has to travel in a train full of Frenchmen.

And to go back to climate.

If one could exactly balance all the things which one desires in a climate, I will tell you what would happen. One would lose three things, each more important than the last—energy, decent

morals, and happiness. I suppose that what one would exactly balance in a climate would be a sufficiency of moisture without discomfort, a sufficiency of light without loss of repose, and a sufficiency of heat without the breeding of noxious things. I take it that the climate of the Balearics in early March carried on throughout the year would fill the bill; or rather the climate of the Balearics supplemented by large rivers which had no mud upon their banks and never overflowed or ran dry, deep forests which were never tangled or marshy, and sublime mountains which never sent down tempest or any other disaster, and which were not, as most mountains are, inhabited by demons.

Well, if one lived in such a climate, I say that one would lose energy and morals and happiness. They say that the mind turns inward when it suffers too much sorrow. That is true; but it remains alive. It turns inward also, but in a permanent, *dead* fashion, when it has no stimulus at all. What people really mean when they say that they would like a perfect climate (granted that they are human beings and not immortals) is that they would like to preserve all the advantages they have acquired from living in their own climate, and yet have them in another and a more delightful climate. Another way of putting it is that they would like all the advantages of contrast without the disadvantages of tedium. Or, to put it more simply still, they would like to go on assuaging their thirst for ever and yet never assuaging it. It is a contradiction in terms; at least, for mortals.

The immortals, by the way, had very odd ideas upon climate. It was the custom of the Gods

of Hellas (who had an excellent climate offered them on the slopes of the hills) to take their leisure above the snow-line, and then at a moment's notice to go south of the first cataract of the Nile into a fiendish heat and eat heavily for days with the Ethiopians, just as our rich go to the Riviera. But with this difference : that they went to Ethiopia not only for climate but for the morals of the inhabitants—which is more than you can say of those who go to the Riviera, my experience of which detestable belt is that no one can decide who most despises the other, the aboriginal or his visitants. The Gods of Hellas also (now dead, because the climate changed) rather concerned themselves with controlling climate than with enjoying it. And that, by the way, is a lesson for us. They were the masters of their environment, and not its subjects. The same is true of very young people, whom I, with these mine eyes, have seen deliberately taking a walk in the rain, or picking up snow itself in their hands, or (what may seem incredible) bathing in cold water and swimming about in it : and when I say cold water I mean very cold water, as, for instance, the English seas in April.

There is not on earth a man more miserable than the man who wanders about following the climate. Before the war very wealthy men were able to do this in Western Europe, and they did it with damnable insistence. If the war should compel them to know their own country, it will have done a little good. But I notice also about these wealthy men (and women)—on the whole, it was truer of the wealthy women than of the wealthy men—that they did not even keep to the

silly rules of their silly class. They did not know where the climate was to be found which they were seeking. Which of them knew the Rousillon? Or which of them the divine coast of the Peaks of Europe above Cavadonga and the hundred little bays of that more glorious Devonshire of the Asturias?

The truth is that the unexpected alone floods the mind—speaking, I say, of mortals. *In Hac Lachrymarum Valle.* Of how it may be on the other side I say nothing.

You are going by night, having missed your way, through an abominable Alpine mist, and you would willingly die if you could find some place to die in. Then comes a glimmering of light through the fog, a little whisper of warmer air, the wreathing of the cloud. You are in a chestnut grove, and it dawns. You get a little lower down through the fragrant forest, you are in its open glades. You hear the torrent, and just before it is day, things are so pleasant that you go to sleep upon the tufted and now dry grass. As you go to sleep you say: "I am in Paradise." So you are. But you would not be if you lived there more than three days.

I think it is the business of the sea which makes men get nearest to the truth in this matter of climate. I have noticed that men who sail the seas never speak of climate, but of weather, and talk of the Tropics and the Arctic, gale and calm and fog and drought and all the million colours and changes of this earthly vestibule of Heaven, as though they were a matter of course, like the furniture of one's house. I never yet heard a sailor say: "Would that I were in this or that climate!" and I never yet knew a sailor who did not settle down at home,

here in England, when at last he could, often in a comfortable native slum. And this is especially true of pilots.

But in all this I have used the word "immortal," writing as though this acquiescence in climate, this restraint of desire, were suitable only for mortals. I will admit that, in some unchanging place where the soul also is unchanging, a permanent climate, permanently suited to the permanent soul, may do well enough and may be better even than a cold, rainy, sunless day in the deep mud of the Weald. Indeed I know such a place, for I visited it once in company with immortal spirits for more than half an hour. It is in the Californian Sierras, where the trees are so high that they are part of the sky. It is in the Tuolumne valley, towards the upper waters of it. In that place men obtain a vision which corresponds to the word "Paradise."

And, talking of Paradise, what fortune is attached to a word! Here is a Persian word wandering about, hopping from tree to tree like a bird, flying to Greece, nesting in the Western liturgy, caged by the monks of the Dark Ages, making a good stay among the French, but settling down at last to be a supreme symbol in the language of the English. So that, to-day, there is no word in English to beat it. It can give the word "Heaven" great odds and come to the post with half a length to spare. That is a great lesson in the history of words.

But if I go on at this rate, there would be no end to my writing, for I should be led on from word to word, and that is the temptation of all writers, against which it is their duty to fight,

as it is the duty of an honest man in a late, frousty, wet, diseased, green, sogging January in the clay of the Weald to fight against any disparagements of his climate: his climate of the mud, where falls not rain, nor hail, nor any snow, but only a perpetual drizzle day after day after day after day after day.

On Accent

STRANGE accident in the history of men! What men most care for, what a particular society most cherishes, what is most vital to it, dies as the individual dies and can never be recovered by posterity. Would you understand a century in the past? You read of it and at once you are bewildered at finding a passionate attachment to things long since grown indifferent; at discovering standards taken for granted, and a scale of values taken for granted, which to-day have disappeared; what is more, at stumbling continually upon terms obviously fundamental *then*, and yet referring to things *now* so dead that we cannot even translate them. And all this is true of the immediate past as well as of the remote past.

Among these astonishingly important things which disappear with the disappearance of living men, consider accent.

If there is one thing really important to-day, it is accent. After money, it most distinguishes the divisions of our society. And what do you think posterity will make of that?

There was a man who made a statement in Parliament a few years ago which seemed to his hearers so fantastic as to be hardly sane. He

was talking of a certain religious minority, an obscure sect, and its peculiar form of education, and he said: "So strongly do we feel upon this matter" (meaning the right to pursue a separate form of education for the children of this sect) "that we would rather our children should drop their h's than lose the Faith." That sounded to a mixed public assembly of modern Englishmen something very nearly mad. The idea that a man would rather have his son drop his h's than lose his religion was something so thoroughly out of their accepted scale of values that it savoured of the unreal. It was like saying that rather than wear brown boots a man would wear no boots at all, or that rather than eat foreign food he would eat nothing. Yet this intensity of feeling upon particular modes of pronunciation is quite modern—at least, as distinguishing classes within the State. As distinguishing foreigners and enemies from natives, the value of accent is, of course, as old as the hills, but as distinguishing the superior social tradition from the inferior, it is brand-new.

It is interesting to note what accents are tolerated and what not; what this modern religion regards as heresy and what as no more than a "diocesan use."

The Irish accent in its various forms is universally admitted. People talking English with an Irish accent do not thereby declare any difference of rank—that is, of inherited wealth—but only a difference of nationality, which is respected. And the same thing is true—though very much modified—of the Scotch accent. I am not quite sure that it is true of the Welsh. Perhaps there is not a sufficiently large body of wealthy men

boasting the Welsh accent to determine the matter.

But other accents, not national but local, are barred with a religious bar. They are profane. And that is the more remarkable when one considers their strength in the three elements of number, of intensity and of difference.

If people recognized real truths of experience instead of being led away by print they would admit that the northern speech is, in southern ears, almost a foreign tongue. A man brought up in the south and finding himself among the populace in a Lancashire town will at first not understand half of what he hears. It is true that the roots are so similar and the words in common so often repeated that the new dialect is mastered much more quickly than would be a foreign tongue. Nevertheless, if the speech of Lancashire belonged to a separate realm, and if the Kentish man, let us say, came into Lancashire as a foreign country, he would think of the Lancashire dialect as a foreign language. Had the two forms of speech developed in different Royal Courts and adopted each its own experiment in spelling (let alone each its alphabet), the one would be more foreign to the other than is Low German to Dutch.

The first of all words, the personal pronoun, is an example. The Kentish man says "I"; he translates the classic word "ego" by a sound which is a rapid diphthong of the pure A, "Ah," and the pure I, "EE." The Lancashire man expresses exactly the same idea by the open A, "AH"; a completely different sound. When he talks in his own name the personal pronoun rhymes with "BAH." When the Kentish man says exactly the same thing the personal pronoun

rhymes with "PIE." And you could not get two vowel sounds more distinct. You may take any number of instances. The "o" of "OLD" in the south is "ow" in the north. Then there is the closed "e" of the south and the open "e" of the north—"Yes" and "Yaahs," and, on the contrary, the closed "a" of the north and the open "a" of the south—"păth" and "paahth."

There is another point about accent which is its curious variability within a short space of time. It varies so rapidly that within one human life a vulgarism or a jest becomes meaningless. What has happened to the "v" replacing the "w" in the Cockney speech, for instance? When the *Pickwick Papers* came out it was universal; Dickens was as close an observer of the physical realities of his time as Mr. Bernard Shaw is to-day. Compare Dickens's Cockney with Mr. Bernard Shaw's admirable and exact transliteration of that noble tongue in its present phase. They are almost two different things! Some have explained this by saying that there has been a change in race, that London has been invaded from the north and from the Midlands; that it was the old Kentish accent which London spoke with in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, and that a Mercian accent has displaced it. The late Professor Yorke Powell maintained this. It may be so; more probably the change is a change *in situ*. Mr. Weller's great grandson (who, I am sorry to say, is now driving a motor-bus instead of a stage coach) talks the modern tongue, and it is utterly different from his forbear's speech.

The imposition of a standard education upon

the poorer people in the State Schools is having an effect, but we hardly know in what direction, although the agency has been at work for some fifty years. Its chief observable effect so far seems to be not in the modification of accent, but in the syllabic pronunciation of certain words, especially names of places.

I have heard—like a tale from a far country—the astonishing story that little innocent children were told to say CI-REN-CES-TER in the place of "Cisseter." And there is again with this change another change, which is the introduction of new and usually pedantic Græco-Latin terms in the place of the old native terms. This is not only the effect of the schools, it is also the effect of the Press and of the ubiquitous action of the modern English State official, who plays a far larger part in our society than do his colleagues in any other province of Europe, not excepting the Germanies. He impresses himself especially in medicine: but also in law, in the payment of State doles and insurances, in the gathering of State dues, in minute and continual inquisition upon every detail of daily life in the home and the factory and the field.

Would you believe that a stout peasant could use the word "circumference" (which is not quite accurate) for the outside headlands of a ploughed field? It was used to me only last week by a man on my farm. And as for "dilution," "percentage," "contributory" and "implement," they have become the tame kittens of cottage speech and roam about at large. With such have also come a great mass of legal and quasi-legal terms, and these are modifying the language as much

as anything. There we have a most interesting parallel to a thing which changed all the speech of Europe at the end of the Roman Empire, for a great mass of our words which used to be called "Teutonic" have turned out, as Wiener shows in his revolutionary essay, to be no more "Teutonic" than the Æneid. They are corruptions of the technical terms used in the Roman Law Courts and Bureaus of Administration. Such, for instance, is all the group of words "Ritter, Rider, Road"—they come from the Posting system of the Roman Empire and its taxation.

But this is taking me very far from my original text of accents, and I return to it with a certain matter for conclusion—it is a matter really near my heart, and it has been haunting me ever since I began this article. It is the slight differences of pronunciation between people of my own social rank (which may be called the professional middle class) and the richer class above it. I mean (in so far as it still exists) the permanently rich class. Here I must say at once that I champion, not only without hesitation but with contempt for all other opinion, the pronunciation of my own class. Not only in accent but in every other thing it is the class which has made the civilization of Europe, and when the people above us differ from us, they are just as wrong as the people below us. So much for them. . . .

But it rankles all the same, that my superiors should put on airs, and I will take a test case: the word "PIANO." When I say "Curse the piano" (and it is a horrible instrument, is it not?) I make it rhyme with the name of the suffete "HANNO," but those above me make it rhyme

with " AH NO." They make of it a more pathetic, and I a more downright word.

It is curious that these slight differences in accent should exist, for the two sets of people are brought up together in the same schools, they meet daily, and even (I am ashamed to say) intermarry. Many would pretend that by this time of day there was no difference left. But there is; and if you watch half a dozen typical words closely I think you will agree with me. I am not speaking of locutions, you will note, but of accent. Now in our locutions we differ enormously from those above and below us, and when I say above and below I do not mean above and below in any scale except the ludicrous but powerful, constant scale of social vanity. Our locutions, I am afraid, we tend to submit to the judgment of those wealthier than ourselves. It is a pity, for our locutions are right and theirs are wrong. For instance, it is right to say " Riding in a carriage," and wrong to say " Driving in a carriage," but " Riding in a carriage " has been heavily defeated by " Driving in a carriage," and is now on the run. Personally, I regret it.

It is high time that a new etiquette book came out about these things. The last one I remember reviewing is now twelve years old, and it was not quite satisfactory, because it dealt largely with (*a*) the abuse of vulgarisms of which no one ever heard, and (*b*) the assertion of rules which were not sound rules at all. It came as a message from the rich to the middle class, and was therefore a very unnatural pronouncement. For it is our part to teach them and not their part to teach us. For instance, this book said: " Do not talk of

people by their postal towns, do not say (if you are going to stop at a rich man's house) that you are going to stop at Puddiford, or whatever the name of the nearest market town may be, but give his palace its full title, and with due respect." But I, for my part, never heard anyone allude to a rich man's house by the nearest postal town. On the contrary, my experience is that people tumble over each other to underline or shout the name of the palace in which they propose to find a brief and humiliating entertainment from Saturday to Monday.

Again, in this book we were told not to say "Port," but "Port Wine"—but that would lead me into the most bitter controversy of modern times, compared with which the old quarrel between *θεοτόκος* and *θεογόνος* was but a lovers' tiff. So I end. . . . But talking of accents, have I got those Greek accents right? I doubt it, for I write this in Wolverhampton, a town divorced from Hellas and heavily blanketing the Alexandrians.

On Truth and the Admiralty

WHAT a pleasure it will be—a minor pleasure, I admit, but life is complex and it is difficult to establish values—what a pleasure it will be when maps and statistics return!

To-day, in this delightful year of 1922, they are all at sixes and sevens. So is everything else, you may say, especially currency—let alone morals. But still, one regrets maps and statistics most because to lose them is to lose one's moorings. We are all adrift without them.

What fun it used to be before the war to discuss the various "Powers" (as they were called). There was a Power called "Germany," and there was another called "Austria," or sometimes "Austria-Hungary," and there was one called "Russia," and there was "the Anglo-Saxon Race," too, and all sorts of things.

When I was a very little boy there was an enormous green blob over the bottom right-hand corner of the map, marked "Turkey," and I remember a learned man telling me that a bit called "Rumania" did not really count as Turkey, and a bit called "Servia" was really quite separate: and they were marked round with a dotted line. But I thought this man an interfering hair-splitter.

On Truth and the Admiralty

I was a human being, though so young, and I liked to stand squarely upon my two feet and to know exactly where I was. So I thought of a country called "Turkey," inhabited by people called "Turks," and I used to see, wandering all over their country, animals called "Turkeys," which, I had been told by some foolish older person, took their name from this district. The young are not yet broken-in to change.

So, on through my early and middle life there was a recognizable Europe. One knew the debatable points (at least, on the map), but there were frontiers. There were powerful centres also, and anomalies to season the dish.

Where is all that to-day?

Thank God, this island at least has a frontier. It is the inviolate sea. I remember a boy at school who used to read the passage as though it ran "the violet sea," so as to make sense, and I applaud him still. "Surrounded by the violet sea," read this sturdy youth. We all knew what "violet" meant: it was a sort of blue. But what the devil was "inviolate"? Lucidity is the soul of style. Therefore, I say, I applaud that youth.

Anyhow, colour or no, brown, green, or grey, the sea sounds all round England. Those who live in this island know where it begins and where it ends, in spite of the bookish people who say that one frontier is the enemy's coastline. (Heaven have mercy upon them, they are living in the past. Some day I will show them an aeroplane!) North of the Pyrenees nobody on the Continent can say as much to-day: since the war! One country has a frontier expanding outwards, bulging, and another has ceased to be a country; and a

third, whilst still a country, has but a theoretical frontier which feels like touch-paper, or like burnt rag; and yet another is a new country, sprung up out of the effect of the war, and with frontiers which are to the old strict frontiers what the chopped-up prose of the new poets is to Pope or Dryden.

I do wish the maps would come back, but I fear they will not come back in my time. I see that, in despair, the people who must sell maps or perish are taking to printing merely physical maps, maps of mountains and rivers and seas. They are returning to Pan and the original gods of this ironic globe. They are (virtually) saying: "Mankind has abandoned its job. Men are no longer political. We yield to you, spirits of the stream and of the hill, the throne we once possessed."

I do not say that the advertisers, printers, company promoters, touts, circularizers, boomsters, spell-binders, and all the rest of the happy throng who are producing the new atlases, use these very words; but that is what they are at, all the same.

Only the other day a man showed me a superb map of Mexico and the United States (as we used to call them in our dear old-fashioned language) up to about the cañon of the Colorado. I said to him: "It is very beautiful, and the contours stand out. The rivers are of a bold blue: the swamps are green: the mountains brown. But I do not see the division between the United States and Mexico." He said to me: "It has not yet been put in because of the League of Nations"—a funny reason. . . .

Then there are statistics. Anything in the world can be proved by statistics, and it was

half the occupation of a serious man with a bee in his bonnet (as most serious men have) to work statistics, to knead them with the fists, and to tread them with the feet, and to juggle them with the thumbs, and to smooth them down with the palm, and to pat them into shape with the fingers, and to square them off with a trowel, and to bake them very cunningly into a hard form. He, having done this, would prove to you anything on earth—I mean before the year 1914. He would prove to you that the French were going down and the Germans going up: that everybody was going to talk English in fifty years: that London (oh! joyful thought!) would stretch out beyond Dorking and Reigate, beyond Hertford and Marlow, within the life of a man: that the United States (I mean America) would easily grow to eat up Europe: that most of the African deserts would be filled with cads, and that the greatness of a nation depended not upon its religion, still less upon its morals, hardly at all upon its courage or intelligence, but wholly upon its hoicking out of coal.

I do wish those statistics would come back! We have had none of them for so many years! We cannot talk of the birth-rate of Egypt or Persia. We no longer know what is meant by export and import . . . and with these two dread words another suggestion works its way into my mind.

The war has produced propaganda. Truth took to its bed in the spring of 1915 and died unregretted, with few attendants, about a year later. Everything since then has been propaganda.

It is an imperative duty to serve one's country,

and one's country in danger of death had to be served by silence and by lies. But now the root has struck, and all this lying and all this silence has become a habit. So to-day, when you read this or that in a paper, you know very well that you are not reading any cold truth at all, but an advertisement. Time was, if a public document said: "The road from Pekaboo to Chakanugga is under repair after the third mile-stone," you believed it and went round by a side way. But to-day, when you read such things, you know that it means, not that the road is under repair, but that it is to the advantage of some man, corporation, policy or State to suggest that it is under repair. . . . If it *is* under repair, well and good . . . but it is a pure chance. They use the truth when it suits them, but only because it suits them. Most of the time they lie.

And here, like a man discovering a diamond in blue clay, let me admit the great exception. Through all this welter of falsehood the Admiralty stands firm. I pick up my charts, I read my various "Pilots" (especially my beloved "English Channel Pilot I"), and the truth comes out, august, white-robed, with level brows, contemptuous of advocacy. The documents of this great Department please me like the Creed. Their level voice is the voice of doom. "*Halnacker Mill open of Bognor Church Spire leads through the Swatchway.*" It is true that the sweeps have fallen from Halnacker Mill and you cannot see it as well from sea as you used to do. If you will allow me (without offence, I hope) to tell you the plain truth, not one man in fifty in one day out of ten has ever seen Halnacker Mill from outside the Owers.

All he sees, even in fair weather, is a sort of blur, which he hopes to be Sussex, or Paradise. Anyhow, the document, the record, is there. If you can see Halnacker Mill, even with the sweeps gone down, and if you open it east of Bognor Church Spire, you will get through the Swatchway: if you don't you will strike the Owers, and I for one shall not care.

So it is with all these pronouncements of marble and of bronze.

"NOTE.—*The mariner will do well to avoid the passage of the Looe Stream at the fall of night against an adverse tide, especially if the wind is freshening from the south-west.*" He will, by God! This is not a statement to frighten Germans or to pacify Jugo-Slavs. It is the thing itself. Stark Truth: Reality, the eldest-born Daughter of Heaven; that Goddess whom some call Aletheia from her lovely face, and others Ananke from her damnable muscles, the grip of whose hand when you ask her to lead you through this tangled world is extraordinarily firm, tactless and painful.

I then, who love statistics and maps, shall, for the next few months or years, confine myself to the publications of the Admiralty in the "Channel Pilot" I and II, in "The West Coast Pilot" and the rest. Their pictures of the British coast are the best I know. The information of the Admiralty is exact, and its motives (alone of the motives now governing our chaotic world) are pure.

A Short Adventure

IT was in Morocco: it was not yet day; and there was a little drizzling rain of that tiresome, feverish sort which you get in those outlandish countries south of Europe and cousin to the desert, only saved from being desert by this same evil rain which does sometimes fall on them. I woke and rose before my companions, and to their annoyance made them rise also, telling them that we needed every hour if we were to reach the sea before the next night.

There was no road, not even such a track as one may see in the American West. Only here and there the sign that wheels had passed over the interminable dusty mud of the plain. We started the unfortunate motor-car and jerked off northwards just as the sad, wet darkness was turning into a sad, wet day. Already the glimmering light showed us the forms of the land, but not yet any direction, and in that first half-hour, as the light grew, we twice urged back, at the peril of our gears, from thick boggy land to harder soil. Then, when it was full daylight, we could better determine our way. There was not a tree anywhere, not even on the distant mountains to the right. There was not a blade of grass. It was a wilderness, where I could

see barren slopes and peaks as much as fifty miles away.

I have often wondered what the original Hebrew was for the term "howling," which so admirably describes a wilderness in the Bible. Some day I will look it up; for whoever got that metaphor knew how to write. Also these damnable empty spaces are not good for the soul: they isolate it beyond due measure.

And so we went North. At nearly every dry stream bed (they came at intervals of some five miles) we had to cast about for the passage. In each we feared to remain. But each was at last successfully passed, though I wondered how long the old machine would stand it. The car was, like most of these models of earlier years, very strongly built, and it was patient and willing; but we were asking too much of it.

It was about nine o'clock in the morning that we came at last to a true river, flowing between steep banks, perhaps 30 ft. high or more; banks of crumbling earth, and even there not a shrub—mere water, coloured as tawny as the waste itself, and cutting through the waste without result. Here it was that the car gave up the ghost. Crawling down the mass of mud upon the zigzag it reached, with many groans and grindings, the river bed. It crossed the ford, making a noise like a saw; but when it was asked to breast the further bank, in one last gallant effort it sobbed out its life and died.

Upon the height of the bank against the sky there stood a Spaniard, to whom, as is natural in that country, we spoke in French. He told us that near by we should find a small town. We

begged him in the meanwhile to fetch us many labourers and a stout rope. This he did. We tied the rope to the front axle in two places, leaving its ends free in the shape of two traces, which traces were taken each by a dozen men, and so, cumbrously, were we hauled to the plateau above. There, sure enough, we saw as filthy a little town as ever was permitted by demons to survive; but the sea was still very far away.

What has always astonished me about these little towns of Islam is the apparent importance of their history compared with their present appearance. I know that it is the fashion to accept, literally enough, the stories of their past doings, and I know that I am going against the fashion in flatly refusing to accept those stories. I do not believe them. I do not believe them of Cordova, and I am fully prepared to disbelieve them of Granada itself. Certainly I disbelieve them of this little town which, as I have so abused it and as, after all, it gave me hospitality, I will not dishonour by name. Its wretched crumbling plaster, its low hovels, the lump of mud which it called a Mosque, the incredible accumulation of filth upon all sides, the air of stagnation and disease, the mere scale of the place, belied the exaggerations of the chronicles. And as I considered that I might have to spend there Heaven knows how many days while messengers were fetching what might or might not bring to life the poor dead car, I could not bear the prospect.

I therefore did something which I could not afford. I took aside the chief of my hauling gang of twenty-four and struck a bargain with him. I said to him: "I cannot possibly reach the port

which I intended to reach over this illimitable wet mass of dusty earth; it is a day's journey away, even if the car were in working order. Is there no other place on the sea coast nearer by where I could get some sort of vessel to take me to a human land? I care not what vessel it is, even though it be one of those vessels which they beach, which are open without deck and run under one lateen sail," for I was not (at the nearest point) much more than a full 100 miles from Cadiz and the Ports of Spain.

He told me that there was one little third-rate port, if you could call it a port, and it was one day's walk away, or, say, five or six hours of marching. Then, at an enormous price, was it arranged with a new team that the car should be hauled by ropes, and hauled it was through the most incredible places, I sitting at the steering-wheel and good Moors hauling in two teams over sandy hillock and across awkward ghylls, until, from a height, we saw suddenly a new road properly modelled, European, Christian, civilized; and beyond it the mixed roofs of Christendom and of Islam; beyond these again the sea: that sea to which the Mohammedan Conqueror came more than a thousand years ago, and into which he rode his horse, saying: "Lord, God! Were I not stopped by this your sea I would ride farther and farther to the West, conquering all lands for your honour and that of your Prophet."

Once on this road things grew easier. There were vehicles and there was life. I paid off my team with a heavy heart, adding (as courtesy, custom, and necessity demanded) a great deal to the agreed sum. Then I went down into the little town.

A Short Adventure

It was a delightful surprise to find as pleasant a little town as ever the evil powers permitted to survive upon this earth. It was clean, it was even coquettish. It was neat ; it climbed down the side of a steep hill and below it a charming little harbour held a brig of sorts, very old, many native boats—large open boats, used for fishing—and, to my great joy, a steamer !

It was a tramp steamer, and that of the smaller sort. It was the least of steamers ; it was a Benjamin ; but when I heard that it would try to start next day for Cadiz I thought it as great a piece of luck as a reprieve, or a fortune, or the sudden power to write a piece of verse which one has been in travail of for years. The next day I paid my money and I went on board, and at noon, which was high tide, that steamer got across the Bar.

Not all steamers can cross the Bar of this little port. Even as we went out we saw the rusty skeleton of a French ship which had gone to pieces in that same attempt a year before.

It was a dreadful Bar : I can only compare it to Appledore in Devon, and I doubt if there was any more water than there is over Appledore ; perhaps less ; but, as I have said, this steamer was the least of steamers and drew as little as a steamer can if it is to take the high seas at all.

There was little wind upon the Atlantic, but huge rollers coming in unbroken, one over the other, monotonously enormous, unceasing. And I said to myself, as she pointed her nose northward : " It will be slow ; it must be endured ; but we are making for Christian land, and this night perhaps (for what is a hundred miles ?) I shall sleep in Paradise, or,

at any rate, in Cadiz." But not at all. There happened a very strange thing indeed. Hardly had her nose been pointed North and the Bar perhaps half a mile behind us, and Africa the horrible, the sterile, the bare, now no longer a place of weariness but a coastline to be observed at my ease, when the man commanding this little ship dropped anchor and lit a pipe.

I have always made it a rule in all my travels not to speak to anyone in command, though it is a rule I have found it very difficult to keep. The reason of this rule is that if you speak to any human being you may agree with him or you may quarrel with him. Now, quarrelling with an equal is entertaining or fatiguing according to one's mood, but quarrelling with one in command is always disastrous unless one has great ambition. Therefore, I did not ask the Captain why he did this thing; but I sat there on the little iron bridge and myself lit a pipe, and indulged in that infantile trick for disappointing fate, which is to imagine things worse than they are.

I said to myself: "We will probably remain anchored here for a day, or perhaps for two days, but within the week I shall see Christian land." And I wondered whether the food in my bag (which was bread and a little cold pork and a bottle of wine) would last out, or whether I should have to depend upon their food, and, if so, what their food was like.

So we lay under the hot sun, rising and falling with the enormous rolls, now in the trough and now on the crest, as regular as the swing of the great silver lamp in front of the Tomb of St. James in Galicia, but on a much bigger scale of rise and fall.

A Short Adventure

There came out of the North a little point of light, which was foam upon the bows of a boat. She came nearer ; in an hour one could make out what she was ; another tiny steamer ; and in another hour she was fairly close at hand. I said to myself : "This is what we are waiting for." But not at all : the little steamer passed us, the Captain at my side muttered her name ; she was off to some Southern port : perhaps Mogador.

And so the hours went by. But at last, not too late in the afternoon, the true cause of our delay appeared. A boat set out from the harbour upon the ebb, rode over the great swell with ease and dexterity ; just caught the moment to toss on board of us, as the sea lifted it, a gentleman extremely well dressed, lean, courteous, and silent. He had preferred to take a comfortable luncheon on shore : had I known that such a thing was possible I would have done so too. His appearance was, for some reason, the signal.

The moment he got on board the ship woke up again, the anchor chain rattled, and she began her way. She made five knots but not seven (at least, that was my guess), and so all day long we wallowed past Africa, and I saw upon my beam a little pirate town and after that a great mountain. At sunset there opened before me for the first time in my life the Gates of Hercules, and marvellous they were to see thus from the West under the reddening light. They were very far away, the narrowest part of the Straits one could barely see, tiny points upon the horizon, and the Rock of Gibraltar one could not see at all, either because it was too far away or because it was hidden round a point of land.

There are sights which if one sees them for the

first time in boyhood, when one can still feel, are like memories of Heaven ; great revelations which build up the mind for the rest of one's life. These sights seen in the decline of life still stir one, though there is a mournful contrast between their power now and their power then. I had not thought that any novel sight could move me as this, my first sight of the Straits, moved me in the fall of that glaring African day.

"Here," said I to myself, "is the entry to the antique world. This is the place out of which the first galleys came and knew the tide. Perhaps through this also (who knows ?) long ships from Atlantis once hauled in with oars bringing arts and letters to those from whom we spring." Through these Straits at this hour was running that convergence of European life which is their modern mark. There were six steamers in sight and the light of others appeared as the darkness fell. After the emptiness of the Atlantic I felt as though the Straits of Gibraltar were a highway, and I amused myself during all the first hours of the night in calculating the courses of the ships by the red and the green lights and their eclipse.

There was no moon ; the stars came out in the warm air, very brilliant and single, and we were nearly nose on for the pointers of the Bear.

But, Lord, how slow was that ship ! The last light declined as we put Trafalgar on the beam ; it was nearly calm, and I, with a vague memory of Trafalgar and Cadiz being quite close together on the map, thought myself already in harbour. But not at all ! It was hour after hour, after hour. At last, long past midnight, and when I had hoped that first one light and then another might be the

light of Cadiz (and had indeed long watched the light of Cadiz itself, which is white and flashing) and was still trying to make out far off to the West the glint of Spartel, I saw a sight which overjoyed me—a buoy with changing coloured lights, such a thing as marks the entrance to a fairway; and along that fairway we went, going the way that the ships of Tyre had gone before us into the great landlocked harbour; the ships of Tyre at which the Hebrew prophet railed so ineffectually. For he said that Tyre would come to nothing. So it did. But it took much longer than he thought.

We steered carefully between ships moored and took up a berth of which they knew, and dropped anchor, and the journey was done.

But I could not land till morning, and all the remaining hours of the night after so strange a passage I watched the Bear going about his monotonous round, and failing to take part in the baths of ocean, until at last it grew bright quickly over the Eastern hills and Cadiz turned white and the sea took on its colour. Then did I land in Christendom and I was greeted by the rising of the sun.

On Sailing the Seas

I NEVER sail the sea but I wonder what makes a people take to it and then leave it again. Nor have I ever seen an explanation of this ; therefore it is that the speculation is of value, for it is one of those which go round and round upon themselves and never come to an end, and so give entertainment to the mind.

When you read in books that such-and-such a nation took to the sea you are usually given a very pretty little explanation of a material kind, as is the modern fashion. They took to the sea because they were situated at such-and-such a point, because the sea they lived on was sheltered, or because they had very good harbours.

It is all nonsense. Those who write like that cannot themselves have sailed the sea. To sail the sea is an occupation at once repulsive and attractive. It is repulsive because it is dangerous, horribly uncomfortable, cramped and unnatural : for man is a land animal. It is attractive because it brings adventure and novelty at every moment, and because, looking back upon it, a man feels a certain pride both in danger overcome and in experience. But it is also attractive in another and much more powerful fashion. It is attractive by a

sort of appetite. A man having sailed the sea and the habit having bitten into him, he will always return to it: why, he cannot tell you. It is what modern people call a "lure" or a "call." He has got it in him and it will not let him rest.

That, I think, is the best answer in the long run to the question I put myself whenever I come back from sailing the sea.

The question, why did such-and-such nations take to the sea and why for so long a time, and then again abandon it for so long a time, I can answer in no other way.

It is a beckoning from powers outside mankind.

It is not even the establishment of commerce by sea which takes a people to sea. Nothing more likely than for a nation to become a nation of transport and yet to see its crews gradually becoming foreign, as its own people grew to dislike the nasty but mysteriously summoning business of wet decks and thumping. It certainly is not proximity to the sea that does the trick. You have all over the world great lumps of population, millions and millions, right on to the sea, who never take to it, but leave a fringe of foreigners to do their sailing. Witness the Slavs. And though, of course, it is true that inland nations are not seafaring nations, the real reason is much more that they choose to be inland than that they happen to be inland.

I have asked myself often enough why the old Egyptians did not take to the sea. Perhaps they did very long ago, but at any rate the memory of it has died out. The other people who traded with them from the North have not even legends of Egyptians coming to them. We have no stories

or inscriptions of Egyptians common in the harbours of the Mediterranean. And yet they had a great river going straight out to sea and a coast that for thousands of years, in the height of their power, invited them. They had ships, no doubt, which were sea-going. We know of fleets, but we are not always certain that they were Egyptian fleets, even when they were fleets under the command of the Egyptian king. What we have not got is an Egyptian maritime legend or tradition.

On the other hand, you find an enormous, volcanic, seafaring energy just where it should not be—on the harbourless coast of the Levant. And it seems certain, to me reading, that those seafarers who kept it up for centuries, the people of Tyre and Sidon, were driven by masterful instinct. It seems possible or even probable that they started from some little islands in the Persian Gulf, and that, for some reason, they came all this way across desert land and began again from other little islands hundreds of miles away upon another sea. Once they had started from the Levantine coast they did everything that the sea makes one do. They explored, and they named. They must have felt the fun of the thing. Commerce can only have been their second motive, though naturally it is the motive *we* put first to-day.

A learned member of the University of Paris has shown that most of the inexplicable Greek names of the Mediterranean were but Phœnician names transformed, and they even went out of the tideless sea into the huge unknown swell of the ocean. And they reached, according to one story, those tin-mines which were either off the Spanish coast or in some part of Britain—perhaps Cornwall.

But remark that these people had everything against them. It is silly to say that they were driven to commerce by their geographical position between East and West. It was just the other way. Their geographical position was the worst possible. The splendid harbours which lay some days' sail to the west of them they knew nothing of. They were on a coast less suited for the shelter of vessels than any in the whole Mediterranean, unless it be the eastern coast of Barbary. They went to sea because a passion seized them for it, because it was in their blood.

I notice again that this passion for the sea does not go, as one would think it ought to, with a particular physical type, nor even with a particular mental type. It certainly goes with a love of adventure, but not with mere vigour, nor even with mere imagination. And the same race will appear, for generations, inhabited by this haunting of the sea, and then will suddenly drop it again.

This island is an example. It was seafaring all during the Roman centuries. Then after the robber raids of the Saxons, Angles, Irish, Frisians, Franks, and the rest, it lost all idea of the sea. When England had become a welter of little districts Pagan and Christian all fighting each other in the sixth and seventh centuries, England no longer went to sea. It got cut off; and when, a little later, seafaring men from Scandinavia attacked it, it could not defend itself. It lay passive. It was not till Alfred's time, more than 400 years after the catastrophe of the first pirate raids in Britain, that there was something of a reluctant seafaring again; and even then it was for more than a hundred years easier to hire Scandinavian crews than to get Englishmen aboard.

But all this while the Irish and the people of the Far West, the Welsh, Southern and Northern, and the Cornish, were filling their legends with the sea.

Then, after a few centuries, the English woke up again to the sea most furiously, in the turn of the Middle Ages. The sea moves them less and less later on. They half forget it. And again, 350 years ago, it catches them again, and they become great captains and have so remained, the English.

This makes me think of another thing, which is the difference in the way the sea has affected the literature of one seafaring nation and another. And there again I can find no explanation. The poems of Homer (which were not, if I may humbly suggest it, written by a committee, but by one man, for it is a rare and individual thing to write a good poem, and these poems are good) are not so much influenced by the sea as are themselves the sea. The Iliad and the Odyssey are epics of the sea—yes, not only the Odyssey, but the Iliad too. The sea comes in all the time and mixes up with the story in a way it does with no other story, not even with the story of Tristan. The moment a word or two on the sea comes into the Iliad the phrase wakes up and moves, and, what is more, *there* you get exact physical description, physical description by a man who has sailed. In most of Homer what is vivid is either a knowledge of what was in men's minds, or a thing told to the writer by others, or the gentle contemplation of some art of which he was himself ignorant and which seemed to him marvellous. But in the matter of the sea it is quite another thing. The names of the Nereids, of the "Nereids as many as there are in the depths of the salt," from the

thirty-eighth to the forty-eighth line, those ten lines of marvel, are the names of waves, and of waves seen by the eye of a man. They are not at second hand. They are all the aspects and all the revelations of the wave.

I am told also that the poet Hesiod gave a complete catalogue of these same ladies, but did it rather less well. Homer has a heavenly roll-call of them, and the best of their names, in my unfortunate judgment, is "Limnoreia," "the wave that runs along the shore." For I also have seen Her, gently running in easy weather along the half-ebb glistening sand, a distant shore. But all their names are at once beautiful and true.

Then also, how exact are his words for the noise of a boat speaking through the depths of the water! And what an epithet for the sea is "cloud-shadowed," or, for the matter of that, "wine dark," though it is true the same word is granted to oxen.

But the thing is not to be argued. You feel it or you do not. I think that conception of horses running on wave-tops was written by a man who had often sailed the sea.

I am tempted to go on with the theme. But if I went further I should be tedious, and perhaps I am so already, for all I know.

To continue, therefore (for if you are being tedious you cannot let go, any more than a tired horse can stop running lest it fall): There are cities made for the sea, and yet they allow themselves to be visited, and do not themselves attempt the sea at all. While there are other cities which you would think long fate and suffering would cure of desperate attempts to use the sea, and yet they use it in the teeth of fate; among which last I count—though

they are not cities at all, but only little towns—my own small harbours of the Channel.

These holes in the land are for the most part quite unsuited to the business of navigation. But how gallantly they keep it up! I know one of them where there forms with regularity every few weeks an enormous island of shingle right in the fairway. It is a harbour out of which no man can come (without a tug) except once in twelve hours on the top of the tide. And even so that huge mass of shingle is piled up plumb in the mouth of it by the south-west wind after every gale, and the gales come every week in winter. Yet do these hearty people dredge that shingle away year after year, and they have done so, I suppose, for 2,000 years, rather than forgo their occupation of the sea.

What sort of people do you suppose were those fellows of the Morbihan who produced vast ships rigged with iron chains, and boasting leathern sails, yet having nowhere, you would say, whither they could trade? The indomitable Romans defeated them at last in their own waters a little north of St. Nazaire, under Quiberon; but what a fight they put up! I think they must have gone to sea for the mere love of it, these men of the Morbihan, as do their descendants to this day. For they are all poor men and get little from their occupation beyond dreams and death.

I know a town also with which the name of Columbus is associated, and some even say (falsely) that his family came from there. It is a town about a day's march north of Vigo, on the Galician coast, and is called "The Green Port," lying at the head of a land-locked bay. One would have thought that Vigo close by, with its incomparable harbour, would

have killed it. But, on the contrary, it flourishes because it is in love with the sea. It is the neatest, whitest little town in the world.

But when it comes to daring, there is nothing we can show, with our modern ease of appliance, like the things that those men did, and not only they, but all the early unrecorded heroes of our race. When the Roman poet wondered at the courage of those who first set out to sea at all, he was right. But what must have been the courage of those who went out until they had long lost sight of land in an adventure as enormous as that of death and who chanced a land-fall after a day or twenty days? If you go across the Atlantic now, for instance, in any one of our ships that are like towns, and look at the size of the seas in a storm, you may ask yourself how men must have felt in that same water upon a craft of, say, three hundred tons, and with no knowledge at all of what lay beyond or whether they should ever see land again.

It is curious that those same historians who belittle the past (and most modern historians do that) will not admit at least that our fathers could build good ships. I have said "three hundred tons" modestly, but your modern historian will, as a rule, reduce the tonnage of the past to the most ridiculous cockle-shells. He wants to believe that nothing big in the way of a ship was made until the time of people who thought like himself—that is, who had his own religion. Yet in spreading this falsehood our modern historians do but increase our admiration of our fathers' courage. They do not diminish the great past by this particular lie. It is clear that both antiquity and the Middle

Ages had large ships: not large compared with the monsters of to-day, but much larger than modern history allows. I have had arguments on this both in print and by word of mouth. For by some fatality the modern historian, who is ignorant of most things (such as ploughing or riding on horses or the length of a day's march), is particularly ignorant of the sea.

When such people tell you, for instance, that the fleet of William the Conqueror was made up of ships like fishing-smacks, ask him how that invader carried his horses; and carry their horses they certainly did, because within a day or two of landing they were there armed and mounted in great numbers. Or ask him, also, for that matter, how they carried their provisions and all the accompaniment of an army.

I seem to remember making a note somewhere of a ship that was built in Bayonne in the Middle Ages, the keel of which, apart from the overhang, was well over 100 ft. long. I was going to say 190, but as it is only a memory and I have not the notes by me, I may be wrong if I say that. It was certainly well over 100, and the record was exact. After all, there is no reason why men who could build a wooden ship at all—I mean a ship to hold the sea—could not build one up to a thousand tons or more. The limit is rather a limit of handling sails than of building. For what made our sudden modern increase in the size of ships was the use of a new motive power.

But one thing was certainly true of all those old ships, and remained true until quite modern times, and that was their light draught. They were all flat; and this is the more remarkable when

one considers their high free-board. I have no doubt that those who study these things, which I do not, and who are experts in them, can explain the affair: it has always puzzled me badly. In very old pictures, miniatures, sculptures, or later engravings and drawings and paintings, the first thing that strikes me is this excess of free-board. I think it must strike the most casual observer who goes down to Portsmouth and looks at the modern low lines of the great men-of-war and contrasts them with the huge wall of the "Victory" size for size. One would think that so much free-board would have made the old craft top-heavy.

In the earlier ships we note regularly great structures forward and astern, poops and forecastles, which look as though they would give a most dangerous purchase to a beam wind, let alone lifting the centre of gravity of the boat too high. Yet they carried these easily, for all their light draught. How very light that draught was until quite modern times, we know by the nature of the harbours they entered, and we also know it from their habit of beaching boats. You read often enough of shipwreck, but very rarely indeed of shipwreck through capsizing. That may be because in earlier times they did not take the wind abeam. But I doubt it.

I imagine the common judgment that sailing into the wind is a recent art to be false. The old ships may not have sailed close to the wind; they certainly did not sail as close to the wind as we do; but that they could sail with the wind a little forward of the beam seems to me common sense. No one can sail a boat of the simplest rig—a boat with a mere balance sail or catrig—without finding

that she can go into the wind. And a boat that could not go into the wind at all could never be certain of harbour. It is true they waited for a fair wind, as for that matter would most sailing-boats to-day if they had the time, and as do all sailing-boats when the wind is too much against them. No man, for instance, could beat out of Rye. There is no room. And in any modern week you may see sailing craft anchored in the Downs, or west of Dungeness, or in any one of the Roads of the Channel, waiting for a favourable wind to take them up or down. But that the ships our forefathers used could not sail into the wind at all seems to me nonsense. Being flat, however, they must have made a lot of leeway, and that is perhaps why it was not worth their while to try and beat for any distance against a strong breeze.

"Leeway!" Why did the devices for overcoming that drawback arrive so late in history? They are deep keels—which is a waste of space and a forbidding of harbours, so that antiquity apparently never adopted them—lee boards and centre boards.

Now lee boards I take to be an invention of the Dutch, who also gave us, if I am not mistaken, the origin of that admirable rig, perfected in the Thames, the London barge. But why did people take such a very long time to think of lee boards? I cannot pretend to the required scholarship and I may be wrong, but surely there is no example of a lee board in antiquity, nor even in any picture remaining to us of the Middle Ages? I take it that the lee board was one of those thousand things quietly invented, unspoken of, between the Dark

Ages and the Renaissance, and that the people of the Low Countries were its authors.

As for the centre board, we know that it is a thing of yesterday. If I am not mistaken, the Americans first sailed on it. I can understand why the centre board should have come so late. It wants great skill in fitting. It seems to invite a leak. It cannot be fitted upon any very large craft easily—and so on. But why did it take humanity such a very long time to think of lee boards, and why, when they came, did they come in this particular corner of Europe?

There is nothing more fascinating than this guess-work upon the origin of little human tricks and the observation of the long and great effect of routine.

To this day the Mediterranean shortens sail along the yard of a lateen—why, I have never got anyone to explain to me. It would seem the obvious thing to take in a reef from the deck, to put your craft up into the wind, lower your sail somewhat, and then take your reef along the foot of it. Indeed, it would be much easier to take in a reef in this fashion on a lateen sail than it is to take one along the boom in an ordinary fore-and-aft rig. You need no ear-ring, and the thing could be done in a moment. Instead of which the swarthy men prefer to lower away the whole contraption. I do not understand the reason at all. Perhaps there is no reason—or, again, perhaps I am wrong and therefore there is no problem at all.

These are the two delightful ways of meeting all the problems which upset mankind, from that of free will to fascinating discussions on the currency, now so much in vogue.

And a blessing I wish you all.

On the Last Infirmity

IF you were to seek for the most irrational of all appetites, the one appetite for which you could not give any sort of reason, you would find it to be the strongest appetite of all: the appetite for posthumous fame.

Milton made a little fortune (in the literary sense of that word—and my fellow-hacks will know what sort of fortune *that* is) by calling it the last infirmity of noble minds. It is a very true saying, not only in its direct sense but in its implication. It is not only true that men who have conquered every other appetite hardly conquer this one; it is also true that there is something divine about the desire for fame, infirmity though it be. The mind remains well noble though still fully possessed of such a desire.

But explain the love of fame you cannot. It would be explicable if there were implanted in the mind of man everywhere and at all times a certitude, as strong as our certitude of the universe about us, that the individual soul survived death with a full, conscious, and continuous memory, *and*, on the top of that, would be more interested in what was going on here than in what was going on in its own place. No such certitude has been granted to man. On the contrary, those who hold the doctrine of

immortality hold it as a special revelation and defend it perilously. The mass of men have been very vague or sceptical or negative about the whole affair. And as to the second part of the proposition, the idea that, even granted this personal, conscious and continuous survival, the soul would be more interested in things happening here on earth than in the things of its own place, no one has ever dreamt or could dream of saying anything so absurd. The farthest to which St. Augustine went (and he went as far as anybody) was to say that the soul, however blessed, retained the great human affections : men hope that this is true, though it is hardly doctrine. But neither St. Augustine nor anyone else (that I know of) ever pretended that the damned or beatified soul was worrying about what Smith, Jones and Robinson thought about some verse it had produced, or was chagrined by their neglect—after it had got rid of the limitations of this world. Why, one does not even bother at fifty about what people may be saying of one's work at twenty-five. Most of us would rather it were forgotten, and some of us actually suppress it at great expense : buying up the first edition and leaving strict injunctions in our wills that any immature stuff shall not be reprinted after our death.

If this is our attitude towards a little development in the little space of half a little mortal life, what do you suppose old Homer cares, or the ever young Theocritus ?

I say "young Theocritus." The adjective gives me pause. How old was he when he died ? His verse was young . . . yes ! . . . but I have, at the moment of writing, no knowledge at all of the date when that remarkable *littérateur* gave up

his trade. Bear with me a moment while I look it up in a book of reference.

. . . . . .

I find in my book of reference that he was born about 300 B.C., and that "he lived for a long time" at the Court of Alexandria. But my book does not tell me how long that "long time" was. Which reminds me of the parish priest of whom the story goes that he preached his sermon from this text: "Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years and *he* died." He first quoted the text, then made a solemn pause, then added: "I have nothing more to say," and left the pulpit—a model to the rest of his order.

Anyhow Theocritus is dead, and he wrote in a very young fashion. But he would be a bold man who should say that Theocritus is caring now either for what I am writing about him here, or even for that magnificent sentence which Andrew Lang constructed in praise of him when he spoke of the "many-coloured flame of Theocritus."

No. The thing is inexplicable. On the other hand, it is extremely useful, as are hunger and thirst and several other little things of the same sort. It is useful to the end of the works of man. If it were not so, what works would man perform at all?

There was a school which had half a dozen adherents in London, and two or three in Paris, genuinely attached to it (and many thousands repeating its formulæ insincerely), and this school said that the artist worked for his own sake or for the sake of art. Heaven knows their productions might have persuaded us even of that impossible theory. They were so bad; so very bad. But the artist, as we all know, does not work for the sake of art, still less for some secret pleasure of his own. He has that

pleasure in working. He admires the chance which guides his hand. But his driving motive is fame. It is the driving motive, also, of all the failures—that is, of the great mass of men. And you have this ridiculous paradox about it, that immediate fame is everywhere suspected. Men everywhere have the uneasy sensation that if they are too much praised before death, they will hardly be sufficiently praised afterwards. And it is the longer praise afterwards that they seek. Endurance between the lips of men : The monument of the mind. That is, a fame of which they will know nothing, or for which, even if they know of it, they will hardly care. The poet says (at it again !)—

> But in that part of Heaven where silent stand
> The still remembering spirits, hearken down,
> And warm again with home to hear the land,
> To hear the land alive with your renown.
> Nor peace nor strength nor laughter could I give
> But these great wages : after death to live.

Not a bit of it. Even if he pulled it off, the poet, he only added a little incense to a great cloud of glory and only a little note to an enormous chorus. He only added a human thing to blessedness beyond the scale of mortality ; like a child who offers a little toy as a present to his elders.

But there the appetite is—a spur to man and an excellent food for irony.

The best thing, perhaps, in that book full of good things called " Seven Men," which Mr. Max Beerbohm wrote, is the picture of the poet who has sold his soul to the devil for a chance of looking up, in the British Museum, references to his work made a hundred years after his death. He finds one only reference (you will remember), and that in

the shape of a casual allusion made, not in connexion with his own work at all, but with another man's work—and in phonetic spelling to boot!

Ronsard brutally faced the problem and got out of it by a lie, or rather by a quirk. He asked the Muses of what profit it was that he should serve them, seeing that the Great Dead took no pleasure in their fame. To which the Muses answered him that the soul is immortal—but that is no reply. The Muses having answered thus, Ronsard goes on to say that people who are devout and religious will always write good verse.

What! Is every one that humbly does his duty and serves his God to be accounted a writer of good verse?

Or again, is no good verse to be good verse because it was written by a bad man? Why, here am I who have just been quoting Milton, a man rotten with the two worst vices: falsehood and pride, but a Poet; and for that matter, I can hardly remember one thoroughly good man who did write good verse, unless it be the author of the "Pange Lingua."

I beg that the poets who read this may seek no quarrel with me. I am not saying that their lives are bad: I am only saying that their verse is bad. And, however bad their verse, you may lay to it that they will go on writing it, in the vain pursuit of posthumous fame. Wherein they resemble those little dogs, so numerous and so diverse, which, in the year of gold (to be accurate, in the autumn of 1892) many others and I led out to Cumnor Hill, and thence sent them following in a flash after the scent of an aniseed bag till they killed nothing on the Martyrs' Memorial at Oxford. They ran very hard, but they ran after nothing: and so it is with the poets, and fame is but a savour and an air.

On a Piece of Rope

THE other day as I was sailing down channel at dawn I contemplated a piece of rope (which was my only companion) and considered how many things attached to it, and of what sort these were.

I considered in the first place (as it has become my unhappy custom to do about most things) how mighty a theme this piece of rope would be for the modern rubbish, for the modern abandonment of common sense. I considered how many thousand people would, in connexion with that bit of rope, write that man had developed it through countless ages of upward striving from the first dim savage regions where some half-apelike creature first twisted grass, to the modern factory of Lord Ropemaker-in-chief, which adorns some Midland Hell to-day. I considered how people made up history of that kind entirely out of their heads and how it sold by the waggon-load. I considered how the other inventions which I had seen arise with my own eyes had always come suddenly, with a burst, unexpectedly, from the oddest quarters. I considered how not even this glaring experience was of the least use in preventing fools from talking folly.

Next I considered, as I watched that bit of rope, the curious historical fact of anonymity. Someone first thought out the bowline knot. Who was it? He never left a record. It seems that he desired to leave none. There would appear to be only two kinds of men who care about leaving a record of themselves: artists and soldiers. Innumerable other creators since the world began are content, it would seem, with creation and despise fame. I have often wondered, for instance, who invented forming fours. I very much doubt his being a soldier. Certainly he was not a poet. If he had been a soldier he would not have let you forget him in a hurry—and as for poets, they are good for nothing and could no more invent a useful thing than fly.

Note you, that forming fours is something which must have been invented at one go. There is no "Development" about it. It is a simple, immediate and revolutionary trick. It was not —and then it was. Note you also that until the trick of forming fours was discovered, no conversion from line into column was possible, and therefore no quick handling of men. So with knots and so with splicing. There are, indeed, one or two knots that have names of men attached to them. There is Walker's knot, for instance. But Walker (if Walker it was who invented it) made no great effort to perpetuate his fame, and all the common useful knots without which civilization could not go on, and on which the State depends, were modestly given to mankind as a Christian man, now dead, used to give his charity! without advertisement.

And this consideration of knots led me to another,

which was of those things which had been done with ropes and which without ropes would never have happened. The sailing of the sea, the execution of countless innocent men, and now and then, by accident, of somebody who really deserved death: The tying up of bundles, which is the solid foundation of all trade: The lasso for the catching of beasts: The hobbling of horses: The strengthening of man through pulleys: The casting of bridges over chasms: The sending of great messages to beleaguered cities: The escapes of kings and heroes. All these would not have been but for ropes.

As I looked at the rope I further considered how strange it was that ropes had never been worshipped. Men have worshipped the wall, and the post, and the sun, and the house. They have worshipped their food and their drink. They have, you may say, ceremonially worshipped their clothes; they have worshipped their headgear especially, crowns, mitres, ta-ra-ras; and they have worshipped the music which they have created. But I never heard of anyone worshipping a rope. Nor have I ever heard of a rope being made a symbol. I can recollect but one case in which it appears in a coat-of-arms, and that is, I think, in the case of the County or City of Chester, where, as I seem to remember, the Chester knot is emblazoned. But no one used it that I can remember in the Crusades, when all coats-of-arms were developing. And this is odd, for they used every other conceivable thing —windmills, spurs, boots, roses, staffs, waves of the sea, the crescent moon, lions and leopards and even the elephant, and black men's heads,

birds, horses, unicorns, griffons, jolly little dogs, chess boards, eagles—every conceivable thing human or imaginary they pressed into service; but no ropes.

One would have thought that the rope would have been a basis of measurement, but there are only two ways in which it comes in for so obvious a purpose, and one of these is lost. There was the old Norman *hrap*, which was vague enough, and there is the cable, the tenth of a sea mile. But the rope does not come into any other measurement; for you cannot count the knots on a log line as a form of measurement with ropes. The measurement itself is not drawn from the rope but from geographical degrees.

Further, I considered the rope (as it lay there) on its literary side. No one has written verses to ropes. There is one verse about ropes, or mainly about ropes in a chaunty, but I do not think there is any poem dedicated to ropes and dealing mainly with ropes. They are about the only thing upon which verse has not been accumulated—bad verse—for centuries.

Yet the rope has one very important place in literature which is not recognized. It is this: that ropes more than any other subject are, I think, a test of a man's power of exposition in prose. If you can describe clearly without a diagram the proper way of making this or that knot, then you are a master of the English tongue. You are not only a master—you are a sign, a portent, a new discoverer, an exception among your fellow men, a unique fellow. For no one yet in this world surely has attained to lucidity in this most difficult branch of all expression

I find over and over again in the passages of those special books which talk of ropes, such language as—"This is a very useful knot and is made as follows :—a bight is taken in the standing apart and is then run over right handedly, that is with the sun or, again, the hands of a watch (only backward), and then under the running part and so through both times and hauled tight by the free end." But if any man should seek to save his life on a dark night in a sudden gust of wind by this description he would fail : he would drown.

Take the simplest of them. Take the Clove Hitch. Write a sentence in English which will explain (without a picture) how to cast a Clove Hitch. I do not think you will succeed.

Talking of this literary side of ropes, see how the rope has accumulated, like everything else, a vast army of technical terms, a whole regiment of words which are its family and of which it is very jealous. People who write of ropes are hardly able to keep off these words although they mean nothing to the reader and are but a darkening and a confusion. There is stranding and half-stranding and there is parcelling, serving and whipping, and crowning and all the rest of it. How came such words there? Who thought them to the point? On what possible metaphors were they founded? In nearly all other groups of technical words you can trace the origin, but here you cannot. Nor can you find the origin of the names for all the hundred things that are made of ropes. Why is a gasket called a gasket? Why is a grommet called a grommet? Why is a true lover's-knot called a true lover's-knot? or a tack a tack? Now and then there is a

glimmering of sense. Halyard is obvious and sheet is explicable. Outhaul and downhaul might be Greek or German so plainly do they reveal their make-up. But what are you to make of bobstay, parrel, runner and shroud? Why are ratlines ratlines? What possible use could they be to a rat? They are no good for *leaving* a sinking ship, though excellent for running up out of the rising water. "Springs" I half understand, but whence in the name of Chelsea came "painter"? Reef points might pass. That is if you admit reef—which, I suppose, is the same as "reave" and "rove"—but, great heavens, where did they get "earrings"—and why do you "mouse" hooks, and what have cats to do with anchors?

A ship is a little world, a little universe, and it has a language of its own, which disdains the land and its reasons.

"Ultima Ratio"

I CAME out of the sea the other day into a little English harbour and landed there. After I had put away everything on board and left my boat in charge of the old man who looks after her in the tidal lock, I stood waiting outside the railway station till my train should come and take me home. And there it was that I saw a German gun.

They had put it up for a trophy. Never was a war with trophies so promiscuous! Never was a war with trophies so much of an anti-climax! The nearest thing to a real trophy which they have had since this war ended was the great pyramid of guns in the middle of the Champs Elysées, all heaped together pell-mell with the cock crowing on the top of them. But I never see a Bavarian or a Prussian gun stuck up mournfully in a little English town without thinking of the English and French guns which are knocking about somewhere among the German states. And what is more, I never see one without thinking how poor a trophy the modern gun makes; especially the German gun, the carriage of which always reminds me of rather heavy and bad agricultural machinery. I think of the trophies of old, of the fine bronze guns taken in the wars against the French, and

of the flags in the churches, and especially that amazing ragged dusty double line of them in the Invalides in Paris, which looks down slantwise through a yellow window and sees, in its solemn gulf below, the huge marble sarcophagus of Napoleon.

However, there was the gun. And as the time of waiting for a train is the most empty time in the world (because you cannot limit it and you do not know whether it is long enough to start a geometrical problem or some other entertaining pastime), I filled it up by walking round that gun.

I guessed it to be a 150, say six inch, but I judge these things badly. At any rate it was a heavy piece, not a howitzer.

I know not what it is, it may be youth and its permanent memories, but when I see a gun firing at the moon cocked up at its utmost elevation, I feel that the weapon has suffered an indignity. It is as though it were an animal going through a performance. For the natural position of a gun is some slight elevation for a normal range, and not this isolated, head-in-the-air, barking attitude which the guns of captivity too often wear. They are noblest, these poor prisoners, when they stand level with the earth as though they were firing at close range in the hopeless effort to stop an advancing wave.

Well, anyhow, there it was, all lifted up, absurdly, like a dog baying.

Then, when I got nearer to the gun, and looked closely at it, I saw something which I have seen so often in a million German things that it has become a commonplace for them in my mind, but I know it is perilous to whisper it on this

side of the Channel. The thing that has become a commonplace in my mind is the fact that Germans cannot *make*, but can only *copy*. They have many negative virtues, very unsuited to their vast aberrations. They are fairly industrious, very simple, normally kind and domestic, and in their dreamy way they half catch now and then what the older civilization of Europe expresses in strong and positive beauty. But they copy. They are impressed. They are a soft metal and ancient Europe is the die. What made me think of this commonplace was the seeing on that gun —actually engraved upon a modern gun !—a poor little copy of Louis XIV. Think of it ! After now much more than two hundred years ! There it was before my astonished eyes, and I could hardly believe it ; the motto of the great king copied upon a Hohenzollern gun ! It was like reading the " *Honi soit qui mal y pense* " of the Plantagenets on the Menu of a Cosmopolitan Hotel. . . .

For Louis XIV in his proudest moment had engraved upon his cannon, just above the middle point where cannons turn upon their trunnions, a great " L " written in a flourishing script with a crown above it, and then along the breach, just above the touch-hole, he had had engraved upon a sort of scroll the phrase " *Ultima ratio regum.*" It was a famous phrase in Europe then. The greatest of English writers made good fun of it when he said : " It seems that his arguments have been turned against himself."

That was Louis XIV's manner ; and, I say, I thought everybody had forgotten it. I thought that no one remembered that motto except a few

miserable people like myself who potter about doing useless things. But I was wrong. The last King of Prussia, the last of the Hohenzollerns, the man upon whom the famous oracle of the thirteenth century has fallen, *he* remembered it—William II, last and most grotesque German Emperor, was responsible for this silly thing.

For there on that gun in the wretched little, absurd little, squalid little station square of a little port, with no one to pay it the honour even of curiosity, I remarked graven things slavishly copied from Louis XIV. First, just above the trunnion, there was a crown and under it, in exactly the same flourishing script of the seventeenth century, the two letters " W. R." interlaced, and between them an eagle looking fiercely to its right. . . . So I take it that this gun was worked for the King of Prussia.

Then at the breach there was a scroll, and in the scroll was a similar script just like that of Louis XIV. And the motto ran : " *Ultima ratio regis* "—" *regis*," mind you, not " *regum*."

We all have the defects of our qualities, and there does go with the German, even with the Prussian, simplicity, an astonishing lack of critical power. " *Ultima ratio regum* " is one thing : " *Ultima ratio regis* " is quite another. It reminded me of the famous quotation : " Frailty, thy name is lady."

Now why was that script ever engraven ? (The date was 1909.) Against whom was this ephemeral Prussian king going to use his argument—his last argument ? I carry back my mind to 1909, and I can remember no one against whom at that moment he was preparing to argue in such a

fashion. It was a quiet time. There was no worry within the Prussian state; Agadir had not been heard of. Yet that was the date and that was the motto. And there was the eagle and there was the inscribed flourishing initial, and there was the crown.

I know very well that some, perhaps most, of my readers—of those who do me the honour to read this rambling—will think me a fool for what I am next to say. But I confess a sentimentality towards that gun. When I was a boy and they were teaching me to drive in the artillery school at Toul they used to give us a sort of vile body on which to experiment our horses and ourselves: old guns of '48—old bronze guns. And these the French had made with great art. They were beautiful things. What touched me most about them was that each of them had a name. One was called " Liberty," another " The Voice of the People," another " Equality," and so on. It is a human instinct and a just one to give names to things. It is part of the truth that we ourselves are made in the image of God. Why, even my boat, which is but a material, inanimate body (may She forgive me), has a name. I must tell you, though you ridicule me, that when I saw that German gun I wished it also had a name.

And what sort of name should it have had? It could not have had a name for an abstract virtue or idea, like a French gun. It might have had the name of a great German man, but the names of such men are soon exhausted. It might have had the name of a jest, for jests are innumerable; but then the reader would have had to understand the jest which would probably have

been local—like " Grandmamma " or " Archie " or the huge French gun I knew in my youth, which the men of my youth called " Silence in the Ranks "—an enormous piece on the top of a fort. Indeed, I cannot conceive what name could have been given to this one gun out of so many guns. Still I wish it had had a name.

If it had had a name I could look back on it, now that I have left it, and say to myself: " What fun I had in those few minutes before the train came in, examining the outward expression of ——, his character, his toilet, his elevation, and all the rest of it ! "

But the gun had no name, and so I must still carry it in my mind anonymously as " the German gun."

Of all the hundreds of guns that I have seen lying about or being carried on trucks or drawn by horses, or standing in the great factories during these years, only one gun has touched me more, and this also was a German gun. I saw it in February, 1915. It lay derelict in a ditch close to the road near the river Ourcq, within an hour of Meaux, and Paris not forty miles away. It was perhaps the extreme gun of all the invasion ; the mark of the high tide. It lay pitifully on one side, like the corpse in Beaudelaire's poem. One wheel it had not at all, but only the axle sticking up into the air, and the other wheel was rotted into the ground. And there lay the poor dead German gun like a fool.

I said to my companion : " Why does not someone of the peasants take it away and keep it for a relic ? " To which my companion answered in the hard French fashion (which differs so much from the more human English way) : " Why should he ? "

On a Tag Provider

THERE are a great number of trades in the world of which one does not hear, because men do not make a full living by them. Most of them are interesting trades.

There is the famous example of the man who gave his trade on the Inquisition Form as "Maker of smoked glasses through which to watch such total eclipses of the sun as may be visible from Greenwich." There is the less known but equally remarkable case of the worm-eater; and to this I can swear to, because I read it in print with my own eyes. It happened years ago in a police court in London. The magistrate said to the poor man who was (as is the fashion of the poor) in trouble, "What is your trade?" to which he answered, "I am a worm-eater." It turned out that he was not a person who ate little worms, nor, metaphorically, a man who made his living out of dejection and humility, but a person who simulated the action of worms upon old wood. He was employed by the furniture fakers to discharge a load of very fine shot from a great distance at wood which had already been scraped and treated with acid and chipped about so that it looked old. This very fine shot made very fine holes

which made the wood look as if it had been worm-eaten. Thus was he a worm-eater.

Then there are the men who do the hind legs of an animal in a pantomime, and there is the trade of the man who is not exactly a detective but, as it were, a detective's servant, and is not let into the secret but simply told to watch. There are great numbers of these honest folk. You may see them all up and down London, and you may mark them by two things. First of all, they always have something new about them, usually a new hat, because they are miserable men and their employers think that if they looked too poor they would be too conspicuous. It is a muddle-headed idea, but there it is. Therefore, they are always given something new in the way of clothing, and usually a hat. This done, they are apt to stay all day within a very narrow area, looking at a particular door and at the same time trying to look as though they were not looking at it. In this they fail. I had a long conversation with one of these innumerable London police-spies two years ago, and gave him great agony by going up to the house after he had spoken to me and warning the people inside.

But of all these hidden trades, the one I like most is that of Tag-Provider (as it used to be called in the old days of party politics). I believe the last of them is dead; at any rate, when I saw him ten years ago he was in a very anxious state, coughing, badly broken by age, and telling me he knew not which way to turn for a meal; yet he had had his prosperous days.

He lived in a little room, a lodging, at the top of an old house overlooking the river. I came

across him quite by accident through my habit of writing rhymes—a pastime to which I have been given all my life. These rhymes I often print and sometimes sign; that is how he got hold of my name. He wrote to me and asked me whether I would go and look over some of his rhymes and see whether I thought they suited. When I got his letter I thought he was a poet who wanted advice, so I wrote my regular answer that I knew nothing about poetry and could not give advice. He wrote again imploringly, saying that he was not a poet in the ordinary sense, but that in his profession it was necessary to introduce rhymes from time to time, and that my judgment really would be of great service to him, for he was good enough to say that I had quite a knack of rhyming, especially at rhyming words of three syllables, which is difficult. So I went round to see him, and being younger than I am now I was able to enjoy his conversation well enough for half an hour or more. He was very proud of his work, and had round his room autograph letters of congratulation which had been sent to him by the most famous politicians of his time. It was he who invented (it was one of the last of his actions) the tag "We want eight and we won't wait." When he asked me if this could be improved, I suggested "No fleet, no meat." He said this would not go down. I asked him why not. He said, "Because the public could not remember very short rhymes." They had to be rather long to have any effect, but not too long. He told me (and he was very proud of it) that he was also the inventor of "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right." "Here," said

he proudly to me, "you have a very fine example of irregular rhyme with two balanced statements in opposition and contrast." "The first," he added, "is concrete, the second abstract: the first is purely historical without moral sequence, the second contains the deepest political and moral lesson."

I wish he had lived to the present day. He might have given us something really good and new, which we badly lack.

He also wrote "One tongue, one flag, one throne." He was not so proud of that, because, he said, that some fool had imported it into the United States, where it did not go down. The enthusiasts kept the "one tongue" part, but they did not know what to add, which spoiled the whole show. He did not make up the phrase "blood is thicker than water," but I suggested to him a very good way in which it could be turned into a poem during any one of those recurrent moments (they turn up every ten years or so) when our politicians are morally certain of wangling the American alliance. The rhyme I suggested was this:

> Blood is thicker than water—
> And so it oughter.

We had a great debate over this, and I fear it was his obstinacy which prevented this really fine rhyme from getting floated. It would have made a great difference, and we might, by this time, have acquired fame between us, had it not been for this silly old man's objections. So true is it that great events spring from small causes!

His objection, oddly enough, was not one of metre but one of grammar; and he added to this

what I think another very silly objection, but one you constantly find in critics of good verse. He said "and so it oughter" made bad syntax with the first line. I said it did not: it must be read elliptically. The full sentence would be "And so it ought to be"; and I then pointed out to him that the very greatest poets had used the elliptical form and that it had appeared in a thousand interesting phrases. I cited to him from that splendid twenty-first sonnet:

> . . . I have found a face
> More beautiful than gardens: More desired
> Than boys in exile love their native place.

He read this several times and said that it did not parse either. I told him that the form had been used by the poet Homer. This had no effect on him. He said it might be all very well in Asia Minor but it would not go down in England, and so, after quite a long dispute, he refused my version. But there it stands, and I am still proud of it:

> Blood is thicker than water—
> And so it oughter.

If ever the Anglo-American Alliance *is* wangled, remember that poem.

I asked him whether he had also produced political tags that did not rhyme, for I had heard a great number in my time, such as "Rome on the Rates." He said he had produced many such pieces of English prose, but that this was not one of them. He wished it had been, for he thought it a very telling phrase, and he could quote me one which had won no fewer than 117

votes. That was not bad in the old days when votes were less common than they are now, and when 117 was worth getting.

He was also very proud of his internal rhymes, particularly of those concerning the land:

> Less of a pleasure place for the rich
> And more of a treasure place for the people.

It was the "pleasure and treasure" rhyme that made the success of that particular tag, he said, and I was quite willing to believe him. But even as he spoke tears came into his eyes, and he added, "You will hardly believe me, sir, when I tell you the agony I have gone through in trying to find a rhyme for 'people.' It is one of the most difficult words in the English language to get a rhyme for. There are many rhymes for the abhorred rich, but none suitable for 'people.' There is 'steeple,' but I think that is about all; and it is dreadfully difficult to work in 'steeple.' I worked at it for three nights and then gave it up in despair. However, the thing in its final form did well enough, as I have told you."

I suggested to him that he might have turned the difficulty by using some other word for "people," as, for instance, hoipolloi, mob, populace, gutter-snipes, boors, dregs, dross, scum and other accurate and suitable words, but he at once stopped me. "None of these will do," he said, "because the People do not like being called those names." "Then," said I, "there is 'citizens,' 'the Britons,' 'Britishers,' and so forth"; but he still wagged his beard from side to side, saying that none of them would fit, "besides which," he added, "they

are just as difficult to rhyme to as the other. It can't be done."

I asked him whether he had made Harmsworth's phrase, "Rolling the French in mud and blood." He said yes, but he had originally written it with a blank —"Rolling the (blank) in mud and blood," and had hawked it all round London for years according as our foreign policy changed. The mud and the blood made a very good rhyme, and any old nation would do to fit into the blank. He had used the words "Russians" and "Spaniards," and even—I say it with horror—"Yankees," for he was at work as long ago as the Alabama claim, which I wasn't. He only wished he had lived long enough to put "Germans," but it happened just to fit in with the French at the moment he wrote it. He sold it to Harmsworth (he told me), and it came out in his papers, "We will roll the French in mud and blood." It did great service, for it frightened the French to death and kept them out of Morocco in 1899.

I next asked him if he had written the famous rhyme—

> We don't want to fight,
> But by jingo if we do,

—which is one of the happiest memories of my childhood. He was immensely flattered—but had to deny the authorship.

"I only wish I had written it, sir," he said (he called me "sir" the whole time, and it pleases me to remember the honour he paid me). "I only wish I *had* written it! That was a real corker! None of the others led to anything so big: this one very nearly made a war and moved

a whole fleet at immense expense from one part of the Mediterranean to the other. No small feat! But what I did write, sir, if you will believe me—and I never got the credit for it—was a most excellent tag called 'Ninepence for fourpence.' It occurred to me in this way. I was sitting in one of Lockhart's cafés, which I patronized in those days, drinking a stir of brown with a slab of thick." I nodded, for the terms were familiar to me; and he continued: "As I did so a man came in with a shilling and said he would have a scone and a cup of tea and a pat of butter (in those days, sir, we had not the advantage of margarine. You young folks have a better time than ever we had!) The man came in, I say, with a shilling and put it down and said he would have a scone and a cup of tea and a pat of butter, and that was threepence. Then they gave him ninepence change. Then he put it back again and said he had changed his mind (the shilling was still lying on the counter), and asked what he could get for one-and-ninepence. The woman who was serving was very flurried with the crush of people, and she said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'One and ninepence. I have paid threepence—that is one and three and nine, makes . . . no, I'll tell you what!' —putting down another shilling—'That makes two and ninepence together. Look here, that's too much.' Then he shifted the coins about a bit while she served other people in her hurry, and then she looked at him again all fussed and said, 'Now then! Make up your mind!' and he said, 'Well, I will tell you what, I think I can afford fourpence. Will you give me a sausage with some bread and a cup of tea?'; and she

said, 'Oh, how you do pester!' Then he put down fourpence, picked up the ninepence change and the shillings, and in this way, after he had had his sausage and tea and bread and butter, he won ninepence by risking fourpence. He was a wizened-looking man with a cunning look and a fixed smile. I have always remembered him; and that is how I got my idea of ninepence for fourpence; but if you will believe me, sir, I sent that into the Central Office and they used it and never paid me!"

"What a shame!" said I. "What are you usually paid?" "Why, sir," he answered, "I used to work on a royalty basis, but it was so difficult to keep the accounts when millions and millions of people used the phrase and when it was printed in all sorts of pamphlets, that I changed my contracts and sold out and out. But now," he added sadly, "I cannot sell a thing. It is a terrible thing the way in which a change of custom takes the bread out of an old man's mouth." I said it was, indeed. "And yet," he continued eagerly, "it is an older trade than you think for. Believe me, sir, it has been in our family for generations." I was astonished to hear this, for I believed tags to be quite modern, but he assured me it was not so. "My own great-grandfather," he said, "was the author of 'No taxation without representation,' and that was a stunner. It rhymed and it took root, two things that often go together, and the old man on his death-bed told my father, who has told me, how it was done, but you will excuse me if I do not tell you that because it is a secret of the trade; it used to be my livelihood and that livelihood may creep up

again." He said these last words rather doubtfully, and was interrupted by a dreadful cough.

I asked him whether he used a rhyming dictionary, like Wordsworth, the great poet. He said, between the intervals of his coughing, "No, sir, no! I find it cramps the style! I ascribe a great deal of Wordsworth's failures to this deleterious habit. I walk the streets, keeping my mind as vacant as possible and then the things occur to me—or rather they did once occur to me," he added sadly. Then he sighed and said, "There is no market any more."

This was years ago. I have hoped against hope that the trick would return, but time has gone by and apparently the market for such things is dead and, as I said before, I think the old man is dead, too. But what a lot of good he did in his time, and how true it is of him, as of many other lesser men, that they achieved far more than they knew, and that their reward was not proportionate to their achievement.

On "And"

Dark eyes adventure bring: the blue, serene,
Do promise Paradise—and yours are green.

THIS little jewel—called "The Lover's Complaint"—is ascribed by some to Herrick. They are wrong. It proceeds from a younger but already faltering pen.

I introduce it only at the head of this to illustrate the singular depth, the weight, the value of the word "and." Even in the English tongue, the noblest vehicle of expression (but in this point weak), the word "and" plays its subtle parts.

We lack the double "and" of antiquity—that subtle repetitive effect in which the classics abound. We have no "*que*" to our "*et*"; we have no τε to our και; we have only our plain "and." But even so, our plain "and" has much diversity about it: a versatile, mercurial word: a knight in the chess play of prose.

"How is this?" you say. "'And' would seem to be but a redundant word to express some addition already apparent."

"'He was drunk, disorderly!' 'And' would seem to be stuck in between the two affirmations from a sort of laziness of the mind."

On "And"

You are wrong. It is a great pleasure to me to tell you that you are wrong.

Even if "and" only pursued this function of letting the mind repose it might be welcomed as a bed; but it does much more. It introduces emphasis, as in the poignant sentence: "Their choice was turbot—and boiled." It also has an elevating effect, hooking up something to the level of the rest; as where it is written:

> Nibbity, bibbity, bobbity bo!—
> *And* the little brown bowl—
> We'll drink to the Barley Mow!

The little brown bowl would have come in absurdly: it would have jolted the mind like a bump in the road, were it not for that precious little "and," which catches it neatly up, putting upon one level that which goes before with that which comes after.

"And" is also indicative. Thus a man whom you meet talks glibly upon one subject after another, rapidly, yet more rapidly, tumbling over himself, desiring to avoid your eye. But he must take breath. You seize your moment and you say, "And what about that five pounds?" The "and" makes all the difference. It makes your remark part of the conversation. A gesture, not a blow.

In the same way you can recall an omitted name. When you have praised Tom, Dick, Harry, you add gently, "And Jack, what about Jack?" It is a pleasant, easy reproach or a reminder. Very much nicer than saying, "Why not a word about Jack?"—which would be brutal.

"And" is also what the older grammarians

have called stammerative—that is, it fills a chasm in the public speeches of public men, though here it is not so useful as certain other sounds. I have made a study of the sounds common to politicians in distress. I find that out of one hundred occasions " er—er " will come in eighty times ; " I—I—I " eleven times ; the less graceful " and . . . , and . . . , and " during periods of embarrassment only accounts for five. Moreover, the repeated " and " is hardly ever used in the absolute ; by public speakers it is nearly always used with " er."

" And " also has the value of an affix. It comes before a lot of little phrases, where it acts like glue, sticking that little phrase on to the rest—" and " if, " and " even, " and " though ; a humble use, but necessary enough, allowing the mind to work in a soft material.

" And " has various rhetorical uses which are to be admired—you can make long lists with it.

So attractive is " and " to the human mind that it will often expand itself, developing like a lot of soap bubbles—" and so," " and moreover," " and also." But the best of all these phrases —the king of them—is " and also, what is more." It is the most familiar of all phrases in the mouths of politicians. Do violence to yourself, force yourself to listen to a politician making speeches in private conversation as is the politician's way. You will hear that phrase repeated. " And also what is more." It is native to the tub-thumping fraternity. These things give a sentence the advantage of piling up wordy wealth, as it were, very satisfactory to the fatigued or the empty or the hesitant.

On "And"

Those great men, our fathers, felt about "and" something reverend or peculiar, so that they hardly thought of it as a word, but as a sort of symbol. They put it at the end of the alphabet, calling it "ampersand." It is one of the worst things about our detestable time that this ancient national thing "ampersand" is forgotten. The old refrain used to be: a, b, c, . . . , x, y, z, *ampersand*—that long word "ampersand," that fine ritual title, referred to the symbol "&" which "and" alone of words possesses. You find it in the old horn books. The children of England knew it by heart for centuries. But the modern flood came: it is gone.

The enemies of "and" will have it that a good style in English is to be obtained by cutting out "and." These are the same people who say that a good style is to be obtained by cutting out adjectives. There are no such short cuts. Also, to be an enemy of "and" is to be an enemy of all good things. It is to fear exuberance, which is the tide of life.

"And" has, again, rhythmical value, as in the ecclestical or liturgical line:

And Parson and Clerk and the Devil and all

—with hosts of other lines which dignify the vast storehouse of the English lyric.

Of the modern masterpieces there is one—the best known of all, perhaps—where "and" does an enormous amount of work, which is the poem of *Innisfree*. It gives the rhythm as well as the mystery. I should like to see what the fools who are for cutting out "and" would make of that poem.

But the most sublime use of "and," alas! we

have not. It is the " and " disjunctive ; on which turned one of the great moments of history.

For you must know that when the second Council of Nicea finally condemned the monstrosities of the Iconoclasts, a saintly bishop from Cyprus wrote his opinion in Greek saying, " I revere, I embrace the sacred images, *και* I give worship to the Life-giving Trinity "—which is as much as to say, that he would be polite enough to an image, *but* his worship he reserved for the only true object of worship.

Now, this pronouncement was carried to a Council of the West, sitting at Frankfort, where there were bishops of the Pyrenees, of Gaul, of the Rhine Valley, of the Low Countries, of the Burgundian Hills, of the Swiss Mountains—indeed of all parts whatsoever that owed allegiance to Charlemagne.

At that moment Charlemagne was already wishing to be an emperor in the West. Those who served him were only too glad to find the Empire of the East—which claimed to be universal —making a howler. But the swarm of holy and unholy men at Frankfort were abominably ignorant of Greek. They did not understand the disjunctive value of *και*. They thought it a mere barbaric " and." They translated this famous phrase " I jumble up in one worship God and images." They rushed out with some fury against such a doctrine. They registered their hatred of it. On this point also Gibbon has (as one might expect) abominably falsified history. . . . But no matter.

The Bishops of Frankfort said what they had to say. In vain did those of Rome, who were acquainted with Greek, tell them that they had

taken the sentence exactly upside down—that it meant " I do *not* worship the images. I distinguish the observance I give them from the worship I offer to That which alone is worthy of worship." They still clung to their primitive error. With difficulty were they led back into the right fold.

What great consequences their ignorance might have had! We might to-day be deprived of the Bambino. We might have lost Brou (but not Santiago, I think; for the Spaniards, and in particular the Galicians, are of a temper which will stand no nonsense. Though 1462 General Councils had condemned images, the Spaniard would have had them all the same: in which I praise him. Honour to the Pilar!).

Now, though it does not concern the little word " and," yet I am reminded (by this mention of the Second Council of Nicea) of a certain story which, as you may not previously have heard it, I will now proceed to relate. With that story I shall conclude; nor will your prayers and entreaties, however loud and passionate, move me to continue. I will tell you the story; then I will have done.

The story is this. As the Eastern bishops were travelling to the second Council of Nicea, the more worldly of them (these were the greater part) were very much disgusted to meet one particularly good bishop who had been bred a shepherd. He was poor. His manners were bad. He did not shave regularly. He was badly dressed. He was what they call in Birmingham " no class."

They jeered at him a little, but more than their jeering was their fear lest they should lose caste by entering the Imperial City in such company.

So after this saintly man had made himself quite intolerable at dinner, they cast up a plot against him.

He had come with only one deacon, sitting each of them upon a mule, the one a brown mule, the other mottled. The mules were stabled in the great inn of the village where all were assembled. When the saintly, but not smart, bishop had gone to his rest, the smart bishops secretly sent a bravo into the stable to cut off the heads of the two mules. " In this way," said these wicked, worldly bishops, " we shall be spared the humiliating presence of the boor when we enter the imperial town ; nor will men ever know that we kept such low company."

Long before it was dawn the poor Bishop's deacon, like a good deacon, a good rustic deacon, shook himself out of sleep. He went down to the stable with a lantern to get ready the beasts against the morning journey. With what horror did he not see there two heads lying upon the ground ! The one was of his own mottled mule, the other of his master's brown mule. The mottled head lay severed upon the straw beside the brown head, the headless trunks leaning all collapsed against the stall sides.

The deacon, rushing up to his master, banged at the door, saying, " My Lord ! My Lord ! Evil men have cut off our mules' heads ! " The Right Reverend, only half awake, said, " Sew them on again ! When I wake I will attend to it."

The deacon went down to the stable. With many tears he sewed on the two heads of the dead mules. The Bishop, when he had risen from sleep, said his prayers, came down into the stable,

where, he having blessed the two mules, they came to life again in the most natural manner in the world. When he had breakfasted, he rejoined his deacon. Mounting the two beasts, they rode out into the break of the day. But, the light broadening as they approached the city gate, the crowd saw with astonishment a brown mule with a mottled head abreast of a mottled mule with a brown head, for the deacon, confused in the half darkness of the morning, had sewed the wrong heads to the wrong bodies.

Note the effect—as the veracious chronicler gives it. " Thus by that very action whereby these evil men had hoped to bring their companion to shame they did but the rather thrust him into glory ; for their cruelty to the dumb beasts did but serve to heighten his holiness, making proof of God's power through him who could bring the dead to life."

Many are the morals of this tale, one of which is that it is silly to take more trouble than is necessary. For if the wicked Bishops had only drugged the mules instead of cutting their heads right off there would have been no miracle, nor glory to their despised colleague. Another is that if a thing is true you must believe it, however astonishing and unlikely it may sound in the ear of the unbeliever. Another is that a bishop has the right to get up rather later than the lower branches of the hierarchy. There are many other morals ; but I will end. For if I go on I shall certainly bring " and " into my own sentences, *which up to this point I have managed to avoid.* " And " is not really necessary at all.

The Cad's Encyclopædia

I HAVE a wealthy friend. He made his money by accident during the war. The Government owed him £500. A careless clerk (who was talking to a minx at the time) added three noughts without thinking, and on his modestly pointing out the error, the department wrote back to say they never made mistakes. And so it rested at that. After long hesitation how to get rid of all this money, he is at last engaged upon what I cannot but think a very useful work. I only wish that every rich man could be inspired by similarly valuable ideas, instead of frittering away money upon buying newspapers and souls and uneatable food in noisy restaurants.

This rich friend of mine had always had the idea, when he was poor, of getting together a Cad's Encyclopædia.

All the publishers whom he approached told him (with truth) that nothing is more venturesome than an Encyclopædia, and that even when one is pretty sure of a large public for one's subject the outlay is very heavy and the risk considerable.

My friend had—in the days of his poverty—prepared a detailed memorandum in which he urged the advantage of his scheme. He pointed

out that there was an enormous number of Cads in the world, and that even those who read books and could afford to buy an Encyclopædia amounted to many millions. He urged the complete novelty of the scheme, the long-felt want, and all the rest of it. But they replied to him that a fatal drawback was the name.

"No doubt," said the head of one great firm, "there is a demand, and Cads naturally desire a book of reference of their own for their guidance and instruction; even those who are not Cads, but only interested in the subject of Cads, would also want it for making research. But few would buy it under that title because it is one which men avoid applying to themselves and dislike having applied to them by others. "You will have noticed," said the great man genially, "that men are eager to ascribe to themselves ignorance, fatuous good nature, even appalling vices, but never Caddishness."

My friend could not but see the justice of the last remark, but he still maintained that a thing was more successful in the long run under its true name. He persisted in his idea, and when the accident of which I speak had suddenly made him rich he proceeded to realize it.

The first volume will be out next October. It will be privately published by a new firm created for the purpose. I hope I shall receive no correspondence upon it, because I cannot be bothered to negotiate its sale, but I shall give my friend the best advice as to how to put it upon the market in the unavoidable shyness of the usual agents.

This Encyclopædia was not an easy thing to get together, apart from the expense. First of

all there was the difficulty of apportioning space. That is a difficulty attaching to all Encyclopædias, but particularly to an Encyclopædia on, and for the use of, and conveying information upon, Cads. In an Encyclopædia of Agriculture, for instance, the editors can make a fair guess as to what space will be wanted for each pest attaching to particular forms of vegetation, but it was difficult indeed to determine which habits of the Cad would require most description ; what should be set aside for his house, what for his clothes, what for his manners ; how many pages should be allowed to the Cad in Literature ; how many inches to the more exotic types of Cad, such as the Negroid Cad, the Dago Cad, the International Wagon-lit Cad, and so on.

Then there was a great debate between my friend and his sister on the vexed question of the She-Cad. I took part in this and strongly proclaimed my own opinion, which I have held for years after a very close examination of the matter, that there is no such thing as a She-Cad. A Cad is the opposite of a gentleman, just as a civilian is the opposite of a soldier, or a layman of a cleric. But there are no She-Gentlemen and therefore there are no She-Cads. To this it was objected by my friend's sister that she had personally known and handled several She-Cads, and she began to give examples. But I am glad to say my friend agreed with me that the type did not exist, and showed how every example his sister quoted was a false type and no more a She-Cad than the lemon sole is a sole, or margarine butter.

Under V. (a volume which we hope to reach

—if the next great war can be staved off—round about 1930) we have, I am glad to say, a long and valuable article on the Virtues of Cads. This article is from various pens. All the introductory part has been written by an expert at party headquarters, and the diagrams have been drawn by a diner-out who has always got on well with Cads and has an exhaustive knowledge of their habits. There is a special division on the financial virtues of Cads by a banker and on the spiritual virtues of Cads by a divine of modernist complexion. But the subject is so large that we have a reference in small capitals at the end of the article to other special articles in the same department, and especially to what may be called the Calendar of Saints among Cads, that is, short biographies of Cads who have excelled in one or other of the virtues.

Among the special articles, that devoted to the Literary Cad is treated in two aspects—one by an opponent of such Cads, the other by an eminent writer who is himself a Cad. Under the same letter "L," we have a biography and bibliography of the Cad's Laureate who—thank Heaven—is still with us.

"C," which will appear in the second volume, due next December, will have under the heading "Candour" an article where the necessary presence of candour in Caddishness is developed in a masterly fashion by a psychological expert, and the fatal effect upon Caddishness of worldly wisdom and subtlety is conclusively proved by an aged novelist. No one can be a Cad (it is there clearly proved) who has not a simple heart. Under the same letter, at the word "Concert" we have "The Cads' Concert"; a full description, with

a detailed bibliography of the latest development in Cad literature, which is the publication to the whole world of everything told one in private, and a great deal that has not been told one at all.

Under "I" there will be an equally interesting and lengthy article upon the Iconography of Cads, with a list of their principal portraits and busts, including public statues of London and other great cities; and under "T" a short, but very illuminating, essay upon the Theology of Cads, illustrated by experts from the whole range of apologetics, beginning with the opinions of the Early Fathers on the matter, and ending, at any rate for the moment, with those of Mr. Wells.

A number of details which would hardly occur to the general reader have been picked out with singular accuracy of judgment by my friend, whose industry and zeal I cannot over-praise. For instance, he himself deals, under "S," with the Cad and Spurs—showing why Cads hate Spurs when they do not wear them themselves, and why when they do wear them themselves they wear them too often and in incongruous surroundings.

Similarly we have the Cad and Checks—divided into cheques on a bank and checks which you wear, the latter coming first for alphabetical reasons. This should, perhaps, appear in the article on Cads and Apparel, under "A," but though the article "Apparel" is exhaustive in its way, readers are referred to special departments of this sort for more detailed acquaintance with their subject. Among other points the famous sentence: "*In colour he affected the maroon, in pattern a quiet check,*" is exhaustively discussed by various hands and its disputed authorship finally established.

Under "A," by the way, we also have Cad's Architecture—a very difficult subject—and a more general psychological and medical heading of Animosity in Cads. The colouring of Cads, natural and artificial, we have, after some debate, put forward to the letter "P" under Pigment, because "C" was getting unwieldy. But Cad Catching or the art of hunting and tracking down a Cad will be included in its natural place with many diagrams and a list of the principal drugs, wines and tobaccos used in the trade.

Cad Curing, on the other hand—that is, the art of curing a Cad of his Caddishness—has been rejected from the heading "C" under the very just decision that it is a false category. There is, properly speaking, no curing of a Cad, because Caddishness is not a disease but a condition which we are perfectly open to accept and even to admire if we please. The whole subject has therefore been relegated to "E," where it is dealt with under the rubric "Elimination." It also appears in the first volume briefly by way of cross-reference under Auto-suggestion with formulæ for daily repetition, such as "*Whatever else I am, I am a gentleman*," or again, "*It is all imagination. I didn't really offend them at all.*" In this department we have valuable exercises described, one of the most original of which is the setting apart of certain streets in London of a particular length (among others, Gower Street and the Cromwell Road) down which the patient is advised to walk at his ordinary gait, repeating the formula, over and over again just after he has paid a call at some house where he found himself coldly received.

The Encyclopædia can be bought at a reduction

of 20 per cent. by those who pay for the whole twelve volumes in advance. My friend, who has already learned the elements of finance (he got his fortune a full six years ago), has calculated that at the present rate of 7 per cent. which any fool can obtain upon good security to-day, he is up about 13*s.* 2*d.* a copy on each subscriber who falls into the trap. He is preparing a cheaper edition to appear immediately after the lists of the first expensive edition are closed. This cheaper edition will consist of the unsold sheets of the first, cut down and put into new cases. I forgot to add that there are a certain number of coloured plates in each volume and a very thorough and exhaustive index, on the new American system, known technically as "The Labyrinth." There is also a number of very handsome maps showing the geographical distribution of Cads and elaborate curves, giving their vital statistics, growth and decay. Every set has attached to it a general "All In" policy of insurance with two new clauses specially drawn up, one for the use of Cads threatened by the various dangers peculiar to their rank, and the other for Non-Cads, ensuring them against the various dangers peculiar to the Cad's approach and neighbourhood. All this insurance is free.

On the Melting of the Ice

I WISH I had been there when the ice melted; in the days when the great river valleys were formed, when the rich meadows were laid down from the mud of the flooded rivers, and when the gravels were rolled along, forming beaches one below the other as the waters subsided, when Northern Europe was carved.

Men were there and saw it. Some say it was so little a while ago that the great monarchies of the hot places, Egypt and Assyria, were in their splendour, and there is something to be said for that saying.

It was an Englishman, spontaneous, individual, but at the same time exact, who started that hare. And the hare may be more than a phantasm. When you read the arguments it looks as though he were right. And if he were right, what an explanation of history! . . . The Ice Melting but 5 or 6,000 years ago.

Then indeed could we explain how it is that the North was unheard of during all these early centuries, and how it was that an increasing field increasingly breeding men, expanded towards the North, and how it is that you have no records of the North before the first movements of tribes

3,000 years ago, and their greater movement 2,000 years ago, and then at last the very late story of the brief Scandinavian adventure with its marvellous epics. And it would explain also the very small numbers of the North and the way in which the North got its language so largely from the South—for what we call the "Teutonic languages" to-day (of which we have no appreciable record till about Charlemagne's time), turn out to be for half their matter at least (and research will increase the proportion) built up of words from the Mediterranean. [Read Wiener, his revolutionary book and the collapse of the "Early Gothic" fraud.]

But apart from what it would explain in history, what a vision it must have been whenever it took place! For the melting of the ice was very rapid. The geologists do not always use their eyes. Look at those great scoops in the chalk hills shorn out by the water as it swung from left to right through the valleys, and see those enormous floods racing down.

See how those huge stones were rolled along which form the gravels of the higher levels, and ask yourselves in what a current they drove! Or wonder at the great sawings through the rock which unite and drain the old lakes of the Pyrenees! That was a sight to see! It is just possible that some one recorded it. Some traveller thrust up northward by exile or by avarice may have come with his slaves and his retinue to the edges of the enormous thing. He may have seen the Rhone tumbling like a sea released through the gap of the Jura. Or he may have seen the white seething at the mouths of the river which laid down the Camargue.

We see no such things nowadays.

Imagine yourself in a galley bowling westward under the Levanter compelled to go further north than you had wished: the wind dropping. Then your hanging about all night off the coast of what is now the Stes. Maries, and then at morning hearing with fright, but with wonder, on your starboard beam to the North, the enormous noise of waters, and seeing the flecks of foam go by you, and catching on the horizon a sort of low tumble or cataract or flood reaching the sea over twenty miles of beach and carrying with it half a county of stones from the hills. There the stones are to this day—a vast plain of sterile pebbles from a fist to a pea. The ancients said that Hercules once passed that way.

Or think what it must have been to stand on the Ventoux and see the melting of the ice from Auvergne. Or to stand driven upward on to the hills of the Artois, and to see the waters rising in the Dover strait below.

For the thing went very quickly, make no doubt of that.

There is a superstition for the moment in favour of slow, very slow, changes in the affairs of this earth. I think that superstition has arisen from a muddle-headed hope that slow work can exclude a Creator and Will. At any rate there is no proof for it. Some of the processes have been very slow (they are exceedingly slow to-day), but some jerks have been rapid enough: revolutionary: catastrophic: and the last melting of the ice was of these.

And what do you suppose happened in the splendid valleys of Norway? To-day they are drowned. What recession of the ice filled them more full?

How did man come to occupy the land released? During what intermission of time, during what generations (few and creative) did the tall fair race, for a moment wanderers, build their little simple structure of a religion which we know so little (because what we have of it is wholly intermixed with the Roman) and of a language which we know still less (for that also is mixed with the South), but at any rate of a special culture common to but a few thousands of men. How came these Scandinavians to copy Roman ships? It all came after the melting of the ice.

Then I ask myself what men saw, and what they felt as they saw, the waterfalls. For those marked all Europe also. Glaciers we know to-day. We have but to imagine them expanded, and the landscape is the same. Stand on the Maladetta and conceive the field of ice holding not only the shoulder of the mountain but all the valley below and out to the plain of France, and you only have the replica of what a man may see from Mont Blanc. Or stand on an Alpine peak and imagine the sheets of ice and snow below you, spread, covering every rock for as far as the eye can reach, and you only have a repetition of what men still see in Greenland. But we have no modern parallel (save in perhaps half a dozen places on the whole earth) by which to reconstruct the enormity of the waterfalls of those days.

For there were not only these swirling waters carving out the great valleys, there was the thundering of water down over the ledges, thousand upon thousand. Perhaps they helped to scoop out the smaller lakes more than did the ice before them. There must have been some such sight above

Grenoble when the great lake which burst seven hundred years ago was forming. For in the beginning that lake basin in which Bourg d'Oisans now stands must have been a mass of ice, and then as the ice melted and as the glacier above it melted all the way up to La Grave, up to the very shoulders of the Pelvoux, what mighty armies of water must have roared down to the trench of the Isere! And wherever there is to-day a gorge (or, at least, in the most of these cuttings) you must have had the same sight. Their little dwindling descendants now and then show a trickle of water for our amusement and we are still astonished. But the grandfathers of these were giants!

They say also that the sea rose. It may have done so. Perhaps it must have done so. And if it did so what a sight must that also not have been: the cutting of the straits.

I have read of but one part of the world in which a tradition remains of such a change, and in that case it may have been an earthquake rather than a rising of the waters: I mean the Straits of Messina. Of the water flooding in here there is a legend; but there is none remaining of the cutting of the chalk between Kent and the Artois; or of the flooding, if it were flooded, of the channel between the Pillars of Hercules; or of the slower lap which gradually just covered the entrances of the Baltic—a freshwater lake.

And by the way, what made that most amazing issue whereby the Black Sea feeds the Eastern Mediterranean with a continuous stream? I have read so many guesses, and they have not satisfied me. It is so long, so narrow, so artificial, and

double at that. Very changed would the history of the world have been—of the modern world—if Nature had played some freak of the same sort to join the central Atlantic and the central Pacific Seas, or if the low sand between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean had not run dry, or if by some shock the Mediterranean had poured into the Jordan valley.

There is much else in the melting of the ice. Was it then that Northern Africa dried up? Was it then that the old watercourses which are now desert and in which you can still find proof of the habitations of men, and the stranded beasts and fishes of old rivers, were in full spate?

Who lived there? What did they in the story of mankind? And did Egypt when it was already able to build and to carve men out of stone, look out from the head of the Delta upon a shallow sea?

I think the greater part of the story of the world's landscape has been lost to us for ever.

On the Hatred of Numbers

I KNEW a man once who was the head of his college and very famous as a scholar; because, although he had no learning, he was very kind and witty. But this man had one thing upon which he never jested, and that was his hatred (which he pretended to be a contempt) of numbers.

He would say, not as a curiosity, still less as an apology, that he was quite incapable of "doing sums"; and as I met him in early youth the example has influenced the whole of my life. I have known all my life what I think many people do not know, or at least not many people of those engaged in exposition, that a large part of educated people feel thus about numbers. They neglect them, or hate them, or despise them, and in any case cannot and will not deal with them.

Now when one learns a thing like that early in life, when one early discovers that a thing apparently ridiculous is quite common, the mind sets to work at once to try and find out an explanation. For a very long time I could pretend to none, but I think I am at last beginning to see my way in the matter and to grasp why it is that so many people avoid the prime measure of reality.

On the face of it one would say that the thing

was impossible, for one can do nothing without numbers. The human life is distinguished from the beastial chiefly by the use and knowledge of numbers. Which reminds me that I once went to see in Berlin a horse of which it was said by its owner that it could count up to ten. This was before the war. I do not know what may have happened since. It was all nonsense; the horse could not count up to ten. What it could do was to move its foot round, tapping it along a row of large numbers, and when it got to the number which the owner wanted it to indicate he spoke to the horse and the horse stopped moving. But to return from Berlin.

Everything done by a human being all day long, even sleeping, is based upon numbers: all his observation and all his action. To be the enemy of number is like being the enemy of the air one breathes or of the necessity of human speech. Why, then, is it that this enmity arises, or at any rate has arisen to-day, rather late perhaps in modern history, and especially here in England?

I think it is due to the convergence of a great number of tendencies.

In the first place, numbers always involve *some* act of thought, just as progress always involves *some* action of the body. And people fight shy of numbers just as they tend to fight shy of exertion. If you have four people to dinner, and you ask three more, that makes seven. It is quite a little sum, and may be compared to the exertion of crossing a room. Still, very often one does not like even to cross the room, but prefers sitting in one's chair to getting up to take a book.

If you are rich enough to be overdrawn at the

bank, and then lucky enough to get a sum of money larger than your overdraft, and then honest enough to pay it in, it is your duty to make a little calculation on the back of the counterfoil, turning a minus into a plus, and you have to carry pence into shillings and shillings into pounds. It is quite a little exertion, like going up a flight of stairs. . . . I fancy that more than half the people who have bank accounts shirk that duty. Yet it is a plain duty, for if you do not know your balance at the bank you may inadvertently smash a stumer, *si j'ose m'exprimer ainsi.*

There is another cause for this fear of numbers, and that is their absolute quality. They have no penumbra. You cannot play the fool with words when they refer to numbers as you can in matters where measure is not exact. You cannot combine a part of reality with a part of illusion, which is the very essence of æsthetic enjoyment. Numbers are thus heartless, and the heart loves to ignore them. If your country is losing population but gaining trade you may boycott the population statistics and dwell lovingly upon the trade statistics. But it is more comfortable still to indulge in a vague vision of your country thoroughly prosperous all round and happy. You see this cause of the hatred of numbers coming out very strongly in the case of people who are losing money. Either they stop keeping accounts or they falsify the accounts by hiding sheer loss under some fancy name, such as Goodwill, or Office Furniture, or " Estimated Value." That is an extreme case, but I am sure that in all cases a part of the dislike of numbers comes from this absolute, bullying quality they have.

Nor is it wholly an unreasonable attitude, for the

functions of the mind not only include appreciations and creative acts which escape rigid measure, but indeed those acts are the most important.

For instance, the ratio one to the square root of two is the most perfect proportion for the dividing of a window, as with a mullion; for it represents to the eye, and through the eye to the soul, that great principle of the Mean which governs harmony throughout the world. It was a proportion which they loved in the true Middle Ages, and I will show it to you combined with the simple proportions of one to two, one to three, etc., in many and many a window of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, in the time when men were still simple. Nevertheless, an artist may quite justly say that in a particular case this rigid rule would bind him too much. Something in the way the light falls, something in the thickness of the walls, or even in the outlook from the window, makes it fail. It is not to the eye what it is to the measurement upon the plan, and so the artist is perfectly right to say that he will here not be bound by an exact framework of number. It only needs a little exaggeration of such an experience or a little repetition of it to make a weak mind abjure measure in art altogether. And there must have been a lot of that abjuration lately to judge by the funny things one sees.

Numbers also disappoint and annoy in another fashion, which is that men read into them more than they say and then blame the numbers for misleading them.

I had a good deal of experience of that during the last two years of the war. People had got fidgety under the strain, and they did not want to

watch the rate of progress made in wearing down the besieged Boche. Sometimes they would angrily deny those numbers altogether. So a man getting into a train for Edinburgh and foolishly expecting it would take him three hours would after, say, the fifth hour get very much annoyed with a companion who should be perpetually pulling out a map and a watch and telling him exactly how far they had come. I remember that this was particularly the case with the rate of German casualty.

There was nothing very mysterious about this ; there was a certain known margin of error, and therefore a certain known maximum and minimum. For instance, it could be calculated from all sorts of sources which confirmed each other—prisoners' reports, published lists, rolls of honour, the rate of retirement of divisions, the analogy of known losses upon our side, and so on. But there came a time after which people were impatient and preferred to believe the whole thing to be fantastic guesswork, because they were in a hurry, and at the same time half despairing. There were hundreds and perhaps thousands of expert soldiers up and down Europe engaged in arriving at these numbers, their conclusions were centralized in the various staffs ; and it was surprising to see by how little the various estimates differed. I remember once at Chantilly comparing a set of figures arrived at by one of the national staffs with another set of figures based upon different national methods, and remarking that there was not five per cent. difference between them. Yet the ordinary member of the public had by that time become completely suspicious of all figures.

The German casualties on the Somme are a good

example. We do not know them to a single unit, and shall never so know them. But we know them within a certain margin of error, and we knew them shortly after the cessation of the battle within a rather larger margin of error. But the ordinary member of the public at home was not in a mood for them, and would not follow them. I got shoals of insulting letters about them from honest people who were disappointed of a miracle. Yet these numbers were of supreme importance. For it was the usury of the Somme, coming after that of Verdun, which began the process of decline upon the enemy's side, politically and morally even more than militarily. The plain man could only see that the Somme had not succeeded in breaking the German line ; his expectation was disappointed ; he thought all this talk of numbers beside the mark, and his annoyance with it took the natural though very illogical form of belabouring the poor dumb figures that had done him no harm.

I remember very well how, after I had published the approximate figure of enemy losses of 1916 in "Land and Water" (supplied of course from Staff figures), the Harmsworth Press fully persuaded the mass of Englishmen that the German recruitment was *inexhaustible*. The figures showed a loss of about one-sixth of the total enemy recruiting power. The general reader could not be bothered with anything so precise. First he thought I had said the enemy were all gone, then he thought that the enemy never could be worn down. He disliked numbers, did the general reader, and every demagogue will do well to play upon that dislike of numbers. It is one of the main ways of deceiving the silly populace.

On the Hatred of Numbers

After all these more or less disreputable reasons for the dislike of numbers one comes to a series of much better reasons, and first among these undoubtedly is the truth expressed in the epigram, "Lies, Damned Lies, and Statistics." You can prove anything almost by Statistics, and therefore if one lives in a time when statistics are a plague (because there is such facility for gathering them under our modern system of arbitrary, all-powerful and highly-centralized government) one comes to suspect their use and even to detest it. Now that suspicion and that detestation are well founded.

The reason they are well founded is this.

Judgment, the most valuable of all the rational qualities, is essentially an integration of an almost infinite number of differentials. The mind is seized with a very large number, an almost infinite number (or, as mathematicians would say, an indefinitely large number) of impressions which it combines, and on the combined effect of which it bases certitude. I have no doubt of an oak tree when I see it, although I do not look at each leaf nor measure the exact outline even of one leaf to note within what margin of error it conforms to the type or form of an oak-leaf. I recognize a voice or a face by integrating a vast number of small differentials, and no amount of mathematical or mechanical argument drawn from impressions far *less* numerous and not combined by a human mind at all would convince me of error. That is why we say that a good portrait is always better than a photograph, and that is why we often say of a photograph that it is not like the original at all. A photograph is only the record of one selected, very limited set of impressions, highly restricted

in number and in time, which cannot compare in value with the general conclusion of an observer using all the human faculties over a considerable time, and endowed with the organic power of unification.

In the same way a piece of statistics, however accurate, concerns only one of an infinite number of factors. You get nearer the truth as you combine one set of statistics with a second, a third, a fourth; but though you were to have a thousand sets they would not outweigh your general judgment based on observation.

For instance, a man knows perfectly well what he means by a wet day. Your statistician may come along with his figures of rainfall and may prove by them that a very fine day was a wet one. He says, "Half an inch of rain fell in twenty-four hours." But if the half-inch of rain all fell in one hour just before the dawn of a hot and cloudless summer's day he is wrong and you are right. To give even a rough impression through mere statistics of what common sense calls "a wet day" you would have to compare many sets of figures. There would be first of all the inches of rainfall, then the number of hours during which perceptible rain was falling, then the number of hours during which the sky was overcast, then the rate of evaporation, then figures showing what proportion of rainfall came in the waking and in the sleeping hours, then a table showing how far the rain was intermittent, for a day during which you have rainfall in the first half and none in the second is not at all the same thing as a day in which rain falls every half-hour. And even when you had all those statistics combined, no

sane man would accept them against his own general impression.

There is a parallel here with the very legitimate suspicion people are beginning to feel toward what is called "scientific" argument in social and domestic matters. If a man has worked hard all the morning in the open air and is very hungry he looks forward to a beefsteak and a pint of beer at luncheon, and if some science fellow comes along with a tabloid and a little water out of a tank it is no good telling the man that such a meal will be "scientifically the equivalent" of what he was expecting. He knows very well that the word "equivalent" here is a lie; and it is hard lines that the noble title of Science should have been degraded as it has been in our generation by nonsense of this sort. They are still at it, but I do not think it will last long, for it is provoking anger. There are people who come and tell country folk that the rooms in which they sleep must have a certain "cubical capacity," so that a great healthy man as strong as an ox and sleeping as no townsman can sleep is "scientifically" proved to be in a very parlous way when he lives as his English fathers have lived before him for a thousand years. And "I with these mine eyes have seen" an inspector insisting that the window-space of a room should be not less than one-tenth or one-quarter or whatever it was of the floor-space, without noting that the window in one case looked on to a blank wall, and in another on to the infinite spaces of the sea.

The use of statistics in argument is essentially deduction from insufficient premises, and though the mass of men who are getting more and more

exasperated with the results of such argument are not yet conscious of the flaw in their oppressors' reasoning, they only know instinctively that it is bad reasoning—and they are right.

The whole argument against the abuse of statistics is summed up in the story of the man who explained what an average was. "If you were struck dead by lightning at my side and I remained safe and sound, we should both be on the average half dead."

But there is a deeper final cause for the suspicion of numbers on which one must touch very carefully, because though it has led to the wildest extravagance in philosophy, and has weakened the use of the human reason in modern times, it none the less has a basis of truth.

Numbers, absolute though they be, and the expression of the human mind's divine capacity for measure, escape us in their ultimate use. The science of numbers, when you have pursued it far enough, lands you where every human analysis lands you—in a contradiction or a mystery. On this account it is that men have been tempted of late to a monstrous denial of mathematical truth, and that as a part of their general revolt against reason. But it is true that you approach regions beyond which what had hitherto been the necessary laws of number cease to stand. You have it wherever there is a sudden passage from an indefinitely increasing number to an indefinitely small one; a sudden passage through what we call "the infinite" to "Zero." And you get it in the "limit" of any mathematical process.

For instance, as you stretch out an ellipse it ought to get more and more like a parabola, at any rate at the business end, if I may so express myself;

and it ought gradually at the end of the process to merge into a parabola. Then, as you go on tilting your plane, you ought logically to be able to follow the process of the parabola turning into an hyperbola. Well, the thing does not happen that way. The ellipse remains an ellipse though its foci get farther and farther apart. It remains an ellipse right up to the critical moment, when the distant focus vanishes into infinity, and, then, suddenly, the curve becomes a parabola, and then in a flash, it turns inside out, splits into two, and is an hyperbola. And no one will ever be able to tell you what happened out in the infinities, where the transmogrification took place.

There is a lot more. . . . Every operation of subtraction, or of the addition of opposite signs, is a mystery ; for the conception of the negative in mathematics is a mystery. As for imaginaries, and the dear old root of minus one, you may call it a convention if you like, but it cannot be altogether a convention since it is a necessary basis for arriving at a truth ; nor is it a lie, though it certainly dresses up like one. Its name is *iota* and I loved it long ago. One might quote of this formidable being what I think St. Augustine said of some Bible-story :

" Non est mendacium sed mysterium."

You may tell me that by far the greater part of men are not concerned with these ultimate far goals of bewilderment and of despair to which the science of numbers will lead them out of their happy homes. I am not so sure. Nowadays when people are so fond of the word " sub-conscious " (and I have myself worked the animal as hard as

was possible on meagre rations) we may drag it in here without extravagance. There is, I think, an instinct in men the least acquainted with mathematics that it is possible to push them too far; and though men begin to tremble long before the limits of human reason are reached—in fact, as a rule, they get the wind up before they reach the Calculi—yet a god tells them in what direction they are going, and warns them that too much curiosity is ill for man.

Off Exmouth

THAT strange, that ever novel, that magical thing—the aspect of one's own land from the sea—is passing out of the literature of the English. I wonder why? I wondered at it the more last week when I went down the coast of Dorset and Devon in my boat under a brilliant sky with a happy north-east following wind and saw the splendid regiment of cliffs martialled in its vast curve eastward from Strait Point to that faint and doubtful wedge on the horizon which was Portland Bill.

Of landscape from within the land our modern literature has had far more than enough, a surfeit and a gorge of it. The theme came tumbling in with the French Revolution and fairly boiled over. But though our time has all in its favour for catching once again the marvel, the unique emotion, which fills a man when he sees his own land from the sea, for some reason the aspect is forgotten.

For one man that came into England from overseas and saw that sight in old days there are a hundred now. You may say that pretty well all the leisured class, which unhappily is the chief fabricator of verse and prose, has thus

seen England. Yet in the verse and prose they fabricate I recollect but very little mention of the thing—and again I wonder why?

If a man were to waste himself upon mere description he could get no better matter for his pen, and none that should more fill his page. The incessant change; the splendid emphasis, now of this and now of that, upon the distant shore; the odd particularity, on a clear day, of details one would never hope to match inland; the vision, equally removed from common experience, of a vague something not to be seized when the mist plays with the coastline or when a haze in a hot noon covers the land; the invitation of harbours; the curious, unexpected, opening of points; the revelation of new things perpetually—all this goes nearly unexpressed. Now and then you get it in the way that is the best way to express any profound emotion in literature—I mean elliptically. Notably have you it in the splendid:

> Sweeping by shores where the names are the names of the victories of England,

in writing which Newbolt left his country his debtor. But it is very rare indeed to-day.

There is in this aspect of land from the sea I know not what of continual discovery and adventure, and therefore of youth, or, if you prefer a more mystical term, of resurrection. That which you thought you knew so well is quite transformed, and as you gaze you begin to think of the people inhabiting the firm earth beyond that line of sand as some unknown and happy people; or, if you remember their arrangements of wealth and poverty and their ambitious follies, they seem not tragic

but comic to you, thus isolated as you are on the waters and free from it all. You think of landsmen as on a stage. And, again, the majesty of the Land itself takes its true place and properly lessens the mere interest in one's fellows. Nowhere does England take on personality so strongly as from the sea.

Whether the cause be northern climate or some other thing, even height, the awfulness of land uplifted, which is so especially stirring to modern men and has produced the modern worship of mountains, seems to have a different and a greater quality when you adore it from the level of the seas. No inland effect of mountains that I have come across in my life (and I have come across many all over the world) can match that sight which so few have seen—the solemn amphitheatre of the Welsh giants standing in rank round the northern corner of Cardigan Bay. Yet, who has given us a picture of it? There may be such a picture somewhere, but at any rate it is not famous. The place is little visited by leisured sails for there is no harbour save Port Madoc, with a very difficult fairway, and shoal. The outer sea also is shoal, and there runs across it for miles, like a barrier, the causeway of St. Patrick, almost out of water, and having at its end the mournful tolling of a great bell. None have occasion, I suppose, to visit that triangle of our seas except those who trade for slate into the little haven. It is upon no track, the great steamers never visit it. You lie there in some summer calm, and those hills which are (by mere measurement) so small compared with the great ranges of Europe, not a third of the Alps or the Pyrenees, stand out

as tremendously, or more tremendously, than the awful cliffs of Araxas or than that dreadful Gulf of Air beyond which, from the Jura, loom the peaks beyond Lake Leman. You seem, as you look on that embayed rank of mightiness and gloom, to lie there at anchor in the presence of great individual and lasting powers, of sentient and watching, though eternally silent, things.

And there is another landscape of the sea, which is that where two countries stand upon either side from the midway of a passage; it is a sight which explains history for one better than most things of travel. Often enough one is told, for instance, how the Irish hills of Wicklow can be caught from the Snowdon range or those of Wexford from the lesser heights of the south, the line of Pembrokeshire near Fishguard and St. Davids. But I remember something which makes one realize the separation and the neighbourhood of the two islands far better than such an inland view: I remember how on a certain November day, very clear and frosty, with a touch of snow upon the hillsides, the Wexford heights and the Welsh stood equidistant from the deck; each plain and neighbourly, yet with all that sea between. Nor shall I ever forget a certain late evening in summer, twenty years ago, when the sun set upon an even sea line, flooding the dark water with crimson, and how Grisnez and the Kentish cliffs to the left and to the right gave to the narrows of the Channel the aspect of a great river mouth, so that one thought, as one gazed, of those wide mountain estuaries of the West, along the coast of the Pacific, where such a river as the Columbia swells down into the sea.

Off Exmouth

But of all those sacramental sights the chief is the landfall from very far away. When a man after days at sea first hesitates whether some tenuous outline or level patch barely perceived, a vast way off, is land or cloud and then comes to the moment of certitude and knows it for land, all his mind changes ; the ship becomes a different thing ; the world, which has been formless and simple, takes on at once name and character. He is back among human things.

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